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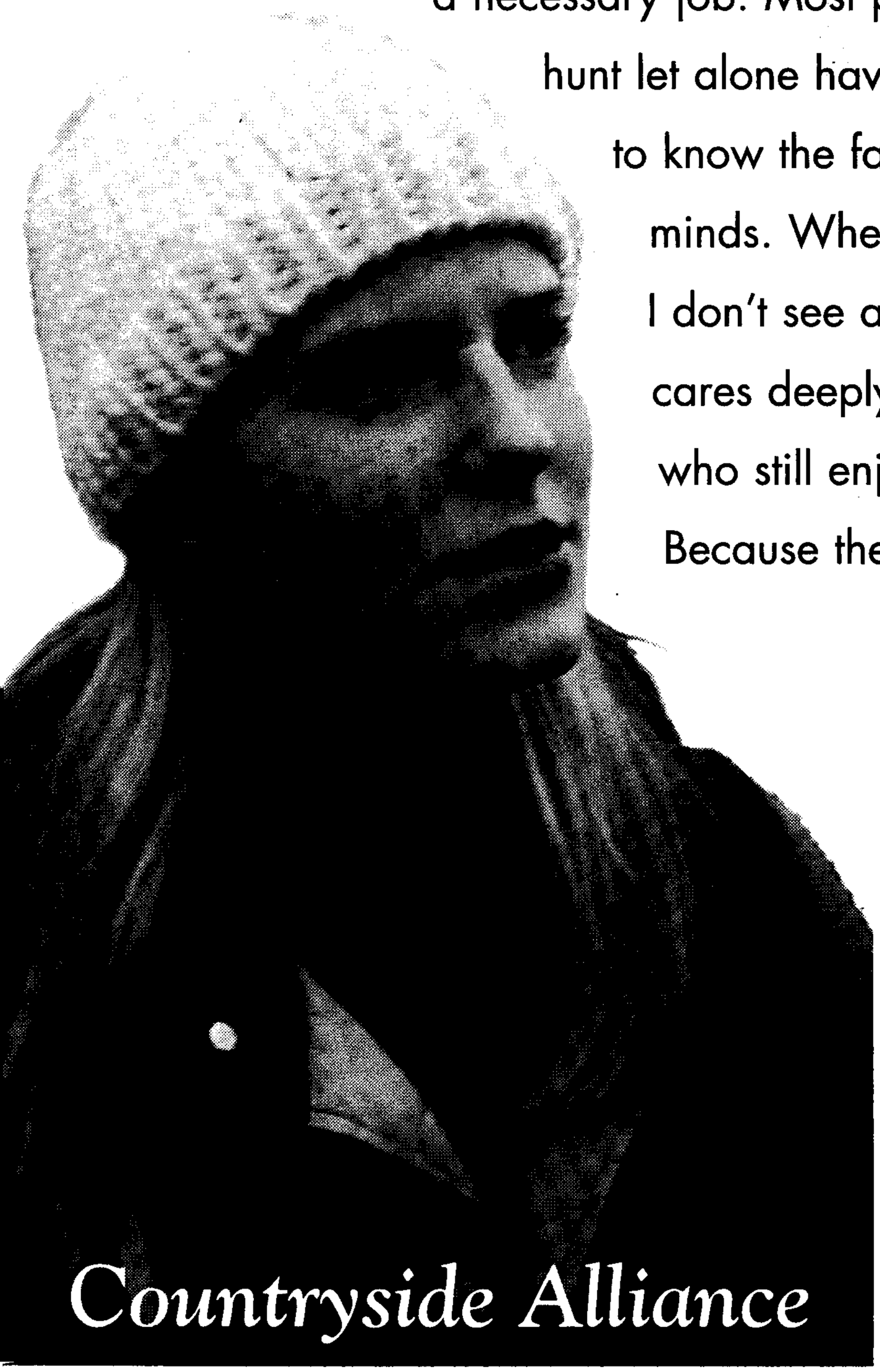

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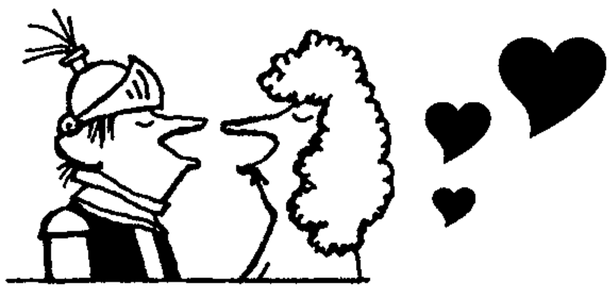

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Gnome

IN COMMON with all my readers of the *Daily Sexpress*, I have been deeply shocked and appalled by the deeply shocking and appalling stories of evil perverts preying on innocent victims via the Internet.

Much as we may rejoice in the communications revolution of the 21st Century heralded by the Internet, there is no doubt that it poses many dangers and constitutes an ever-present threat to the well-being of our children.

The sentences imposed last week on a group of depraved paedophiles are pitifully inadequate in the light of their heinous activities.

My papers will campaign ceaselessly to stamp out these disgusting practices. We will crusade by night and day for longer and sterner sentences for this detritus of the human race.

E Strobes
pp Lord Gnome
Sexpress House
Porn Street
Soho

(Why not visit our Sexpress Adult Website www.teensluts.hardcore.uk)

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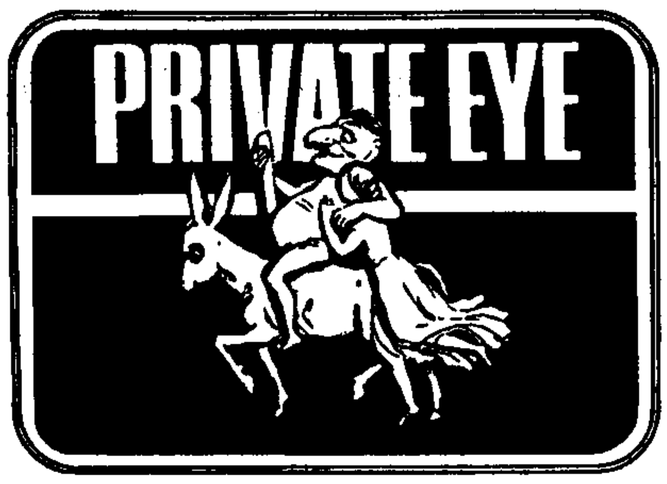


That New New Labour Logo

Man With Albatross

THE blitz of five targets just south of Baghdad by US and UK warplanes last week was not, in fact, the first demonstration of George W Bush's compassionate conservatism to the Iraqi people.

Just two days after his inauguration Dubya ordered a cruise missile strike on… a veterinary clinic at Simawa in the south of Iraq. The attack, according to the Iraqis, killed six people (animal casualties were not recorded).

But, as Bomber Blair's top guns were not involved, the raid went unreported on this side of the Atlantic.

NOT much has been heard lately of the idea, floated in the wake of the 1997 general election, that the, er, radical "new" Labour government might do away with the civil list, which currently costs the taxpayer nearly £8m a year to keep the Queen and her family in the style to which they are accustomed.

Not much from government, anyway. But Brenda herself surprised the recent meeting of the way ahead group (WAG) of senior royals and their aides by unveiling a plan to scrap the current system of royal finances.

Cutbacks in royal expenses, greater commercial use of royal properties and some discreet sponsorship have pushed Brenda & Co into the black in recent years.

The civil list was fixed at £7.9m a year by John Major in 1991, when it allowed for an annual inflation rate of 7.5 percent. As actual inflation was much lower, the Palace accumulated a surplus of nearly £40m — including £12m in interest. Last year Tony Blair renewed the civil list at £7.9m until 2011 (this time only assuming an inflation rate of 2.5 percent).

Royal treasurers think that by then — even as early as 2008 — they will be self sufficient - and achieve the publicity coup of returning the state handout.

BUSINESS is licking its lips at the prospect of the opportunities for the private sector in Labour's second term – particularly in education.

Global investment bank Merrill Lynch has formed a new "public affairs" (aka lobbying) unit, hiring former Number 10 staffer Gill Christopher-Cambers as second-in-command.

Christopher-Cambers spent the last four years as manager of the prime minister's political office, and was also an assistant to Blair's right hand man Jonathan Powell for two years. Before that she worked for, er, Keith Vaz. Christopher-Cambers boss at Merril Lynch is Miles Webber, a former trade union official who sat on the board of Robin Cook's think tank, the "Foreign Policy Centre".

Merrill Lynch is particularly keen to make sure the Global Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) works in favour of international investors like itself. Merrill Lynch analysts have suggested that within 10 years the privatisation of world school systems could increase dramatically, with large opportunities for profits. Within days of Merrill Lynch launching its new lobby, Tony Blair was expanding the private sector foothold in education by announcing his plan for new business-sponsored "specialist" schools.

AIR traffic controllers are alarmed that the bid by private company Serco to run Britain's air corridors appears to have impressed many in Whitehall.

The controversial bids are on John Prescott's desk, but for some reason the deputy prime minister is delaying the moment he announces who will be the Railtrack of the skies. Forthcoming election, anyone?

Serco is a privatisation specialist already doing much for the government — like running prisons including the grisly Doncatraz. But air traffic controllers are scared. Serco may be heavyweight when it comes to making profits and cutbacks, but it is seen as a lightweight in controlling the skies. The firm runs just a few small regional airports in the UK and one or two internationally, notably the Middle East.

Strangely Serco actually reduced its air traffic control activity as soon as the privatisation bidding was announced. In August 1999, a month after Prescott announced the aerial sell-off, Serco walked away from running Liverpool airport. It gave up the job as ownership of the airport moved from British Aerospace to Peel Holdings. Some transport experts suggest that Liverpool Airport was not in a good state, so Serco was happy to shed the responsibility because a poor inspection report by the Civil Aviation Authority's safety regulation group would be a very black mark to carry while bidding for national air traffic control. Serco says it gave up the job "totally amicably".

Meanwhile, John Bridgeman, former director-general of the office of fair trading (OFT), has joined Lockheed's air privatisation bid – a bid that is struggling because of accusations about… fair trade.

As head of the OFT Bridgeman had to deal with unfair monopolies. However, Lockheed's bid, were it successful, would make the company both the main UK buyer of air traffic control equipment… at the same time as being the principal seller of such high-tech machinery in the UK.

ON 13 FEBRUARY, in a fit of faith in Dixons, the retail company he chairs, Sir Stanley Kalms "offloaded" three million of his shares for slightly more than £8m.

The *Financial Times* reported that he had "entered into a complex share loan agreement under which he could dispose of the three million shares in a tax efficient manner". And how could he do that? The FT report went on: "He has loaned the shares to an unnamed third party for an unspecified period." Could the lucky but anonymous third party be the Tory party, by any chance?

Sir Stanley is named as the donor of more than £5,000 to the Tories, though it is likely (since he is a multi-millionaire) that he has already given very much more. Dixons shares plunged 16p at the news of their chairman's loyalty and are likely to go on falling, especially as three other directors (Ian Livingstone, David Gilbert and David Hamid) managed to dispose of about 140,000 shares on the same day.

"May your bid for the Dome succeed"

NEWS

ROBIN COOK, the secretary of state for arms sales ("Foreign and Commonwealth affairs", shurely?), was badly caught out by the joint defence, foreign affairs, international development and trade select committee at the end of last month when he was recalled to explain his inaction over arms control.

Luckily for Cook and his "compassionate" foreign policy, his bumbling in parliament was completely overshadowed by the Lockerbie verdict and made little impact on the newspapers. The joint select committee was particularly keen to know why Cook adamantly refused to let parliament scrutinise individual export licences before the weapons were sent to bolster dictators or fuel foreign wars.

Cook's pretence was that it was just too much work for MPs, what with 12,000 individual licences to think about. Committee chair Ted Rowlands, clear that MPs only wanted to look at the contentious licences, called Cook's bluff and told the foreign secretary: "You keep on, dare I use the word, retreating to the fact that it is 12,000 — we are not talking about 12,000… We are talking about a very small fraction of licences. Secretary of state, you do not actually view 12,000 licences, do you?"

This sent Cook, who was once quite good at cutting through Tory fog on arms, into a spin of drivel, admitting that of the 12,000 only "a few" came to him and that "I absolutely agree it is a very small proportion, I am not challenging that". Asked for a "rough and ready assessment" of how many licences fall on ministerial desks, Cook could only play for time, pleading: "I would not want to give a figure off-hand." He offered to send a written answer at some future unspecified date.

One reason Cook is so wary of giving MPs the right to oversee licences is that the government is busy signing away control over arms licensing through the "Framework agreement". After all, arming tyrants is a competitive business. Or as Cook put it: "In reality, if we are going to match the competition from the United States, there is going to have to be a greater degree of coordination and specialisation among the European nations which have defence industries, and unless we do have that greater cooperation the probability is that we will lose all orders from the Gulf States or wherever to the United States."

THE conviction of a Libyan intelligence agent for the Lockerbie bombing, on the ground that Lockerbie was a tit for tat blow to repay the Americans and British for the bombing of Libya in April 1986, must lead presumably to a revision of Margaret Thatcher's memoirs, The Downing Street Years.

These were published in 1993, two years after the indictment of the two Libyan intelligence agents for the bombing. On pages 448 and 449, la Thatch boasts about the way the US bombing of Libya was "a more decisive blow against Libyan-sponsored terrorism than I could ever have imagined… But the much-vaunted Libyan counter-attack did not and could not take place. Gadaffi had not been destroyed but had been humbled. There was a marked decline in Libyan-sponsored terrorism."

AFTER months of trial and tribulation, Equitable Life has found a new chairman – one Vanni Treves, who stands to earn up to £250,000 "if the board feels he has done a good job".

The announcement from Equitable last week described Treves as a top City lawyer who is chairman of Channel 4 and the London Business School. Most impressive, and most reassuring for the thousands of Equitable Life policyholders who fear for their pensions.

But would they be so reassured had they known the following, which did not appear in his CV?

On 6 August 1991, as senior partner at the City solicitors Macfarlanes, Treves was consulted by Peter Laister, a director of Maxwell Communications Corporation, who had been alarmed to discover Cap'n Bob's unauthorised plunder. His legal counsel is recorded in Tom Bower's book *Maxwell: The Final Verdict*.

"Don't make any public statement."

"Who *can* we tell?" asked a puzzled Laister, who assumed it was his duty as a director to expose Maxwell's wrongdoing.

"Nobody. You must exercise absolute caution."

Two days later Laister returned to the lawyer's office, accompanied by three other directors who were worried about Cap'n Bob's crookery. Treves again told them to keep mum. "You're in a dangerous position. You could be held liable for breaches of the Companies' Acts, which require you to protect the shareholders' interests. You must urgently get all the facts, but don't talk to anyone, including the auditors. Talking to others could mean leaks…"

If Treves had advised them to go public, Maxwell might have been stopped in his tracks. Instead, the fat fraudster was able to carry on stealing for another three months, until he fell off his yacht.

OH, YEAH? The bikini, which was sold by Andress, is expected to find its home in the Piccadilly branch of Planet Hollywood. The sale was welcomed by Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, who called for the bikini and other items of film and cultural memorabilia, to be retained in Britain as "national treasures".

– *The Times, 16 February 2001*

MEDICAL staff at Bedford Hospital are determined that health secretary Alan Milburn will not get away with laying all the blame for the "bodies in the chapel" scandal at the feet of management (see *Eyes passim*).

They have written to Milburn demanding the reinstatement of former chief executive Ken Williams, who was pressurised into stepping down after pictures which showed that the hospital's chapel of rest had been used as a makeshift mortuary appeared in the press.

If Milburn refuses, the consultants have pledged to put up one of their own as an independent parliamentary candidate to stand on a "save the NHS" platform against Bedford's Labour MP Patrick Hall. Could the star of the next election be not the man in the white suit, but the man in the white coat?

THE BBC made every effort to commemorate Britain's first Holocaust Memorial Day on 27 January in fitting style.

Its coverage of the ceremony at Westminster, narrated by its avuncular world affairs editor John Simpson, was followed by a screening of the film Schindler's List, while BBC Knowledge devoted an entire evening's viewing to its Holocaust night.

One subject that did not get a mention, however, was the matter of a small German publishing firm with a nice line in producing Wehrmacht-edition propaganda for the German troops. Its earnings increased eleven-fold during World War Two, and it donated money to the Nazi party. Could this be because Bertelsmann Media Group (BMG), now the third biggest media company in the world, holds the contract to publish all of the music commissioned for BBC programmes, including the massively popular Teletubbies merchandise?

O·B·N

According to a survey in Red magazine, women feel that they're failures because they don't live up to Nigella Lawson.

They shouldn't worry because no one could live up to Nigella.

She's breathtakingly beautiful with a perfect figure. She's a marvellous cook, an emotional rock to her clever husband, John Diamond, writes two weekly columns, works like a navvy, makes irresistible TV series and produces bestsellers as well as perfect cakes.

She's kind and very funny. I'm afraid she's also terribly nice.

LYNDA LEE-POTTER
Daily Mail

Nominated by A.E. Daniels.

£10 paid for entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Street Of Shame

"SICKENING." Thus the Daily Express's huge front-page headline last week above a story about internet porn fiends. More amusingly still, the paper carried a new slogan under its masthead: "Fighting For Family Values."

Anyone wanting a clearer picture of Richard Desmond's own values should log on without delay to his Fantasy121 website, where impoverished young women are paid to get their kit off and have sex with Dirty Des's photographers.

Still, to be fair, Desmond does have some standards. As he boasts of his porn mags: "I don't do animals and I don't do Dutch." Lord Gnome's request for an explanation of the latter bit of trade jargon has brought a bewildering collection of replies. "Can I express my profound surprise that such a clear reference to anal sex could be so easily missed?" one reader writes, explaining that Dutch refers to the "nether lands" (Geddit!?!)

Not so, says another correspondent, who quotes the definition from Jonathan Green's definitive Dictionary of Slang: "Dutch [1990s] (US): intercourse between breasts." But yet another reader draws our attention to an even more exotic definition –unprintable in a family magazine.

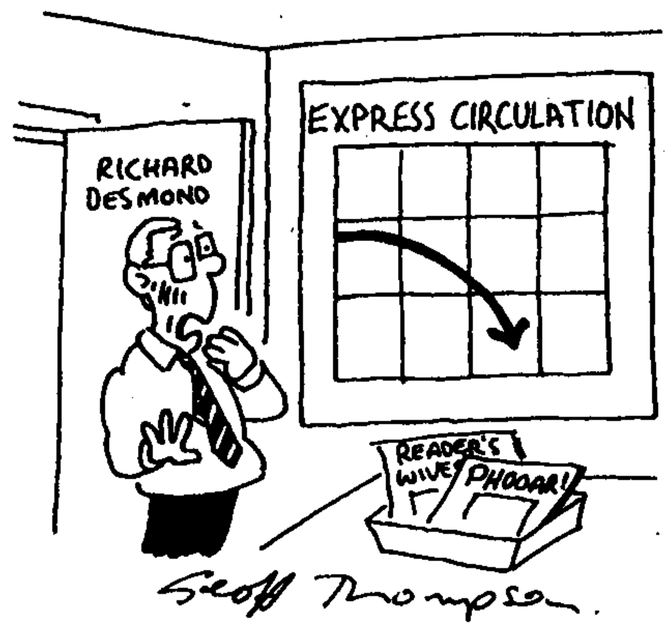
Who knows which "Dutch" Dirty Desmond had in mind? Whatever it is, however, he doesn't do it. Too busy fighting for family values, no doubt.

SHOCK news at the *Guardian* where longstanding picture editor Eamonn McCabe has been relieved of his duties and is returning to the role of humble photographer, following the replacement of the picture desk with a new "creative department" under former head of design, Mark Porter.

McCabe's 13-year reign will be fondly remembered for such highlights as printing a picture of a young female picture researcher with the caption: "A leader of North London yobbo girl gangs", and asking the picture library for the file on Neil Hamilton: "That nutter who killed the kids in Dunblane" (see *Eyes passim*).

Two of his new "colleagues" on the *Grauniad* who will be sure to welcome him to their clique are Tom Jenkins and Murdo McCleod who won the newly created categories of sports photographer and photographer of the year respectively in the What the Papers Say Awards 2000. The decision to bestow these honours was of course in no way influenced by the presence of McCabe, a former What the Papers Say presenter, on the panel of judges.

Meanwhile embarrassment for Bob Bodman, picture editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, whose son Bob Bodman junior, also of the *Torygraph*, was named Guinness Young Photographer of the Year in the Picture Editors' Guild awards earlier this month. Having won the £5,000 award, Bodman junior suddenly "remembered" that one of the pictures he had entered had not been taken during the last 12 months and offered to return his award – somewhat embarrassing for his old dad who had to cancel a celebratory spread planned for the next day's paper.



"Ooer, this has never happened to me before"

SIX years after being sacked from the *Express* for "gross misconduct", advertising supremo Stan Myerson returned to the paper as one of Richard Desmond's senior henchmen. And boy is he is enjoying himself. At meetings in the Grey Lubyanka his favourite technique for intimidating underlings is to warn: "I'm a killer! I'm a killer! Nobody gets in the ring with me and survives!"

One battered sparring partner is hapless Ben Young, who runs the advertising department's "business development unit". Myerson strode into his office the other day and announced: "Your desk is bigger than mine. I'm taking it." Within half an hour two burly porters had duly hauled the trophy to Big Stan's lair.

Out for the count is Paul Wolfenden, *Express* marketing director, who has been peremptorily sacked. Before administering the knockout punch, Myerson and fellow-henchman Martin Ellice found an ingenious method of humiliating him. At management board sessions, Wolfenden would be asked to outline his ideas for the paper's future. When an idea met with their approval, Myerson or Ellice rang a little bell. When not, they blew loud raspberries through a kazoo.

CONGRATULATIONS to *Express* sports writer Jim Holden. He seems likely to escape the cull of journalists at the paper now the government has decided not to refer Richard Desmond's purchase to the monopolies and mergers commission.

Holden wrote a superb two-page feature on the new National Football Museum which opened last week in Preston. He dwelt lovingly on exhibits such as "the leather brace contraption worn by Bert Trautmann after he broke his neck in the 1956 FA Cup", and "old boots and balls and medals and caps, the Wembley crossbar hit by Geoff Hurst, thousands of magnificent photos," and so on.

Wisely Holden recognised the most important item in the museum and knew it would make a fitting climax to his copy. "The very last exhibit illustrates the ever-changing times of the game," he wrote perceptively. "It is millionaire footballer David Beckham pictured with his millionaire wife on the front cover of OK! Magazine."

As OK!'s owner, one Richard Desmond, might have put it: "The lad done fuckin' well."

MEL GIBSON's new film *What Women Want* inspired the *Sun* to run a colour spread on "What Guys'n'Gals *Really* Want". Her Perfect Day began with waking up to hugs and kisses from a Brad Pitt lookalike husband, followed by lots of shopping, workouts at health clubs, candlelit dinner etc. His Perfect Day consisted largely of football, beer, huge steaks and sex galore with a succession of busty, insatiable page three girls.

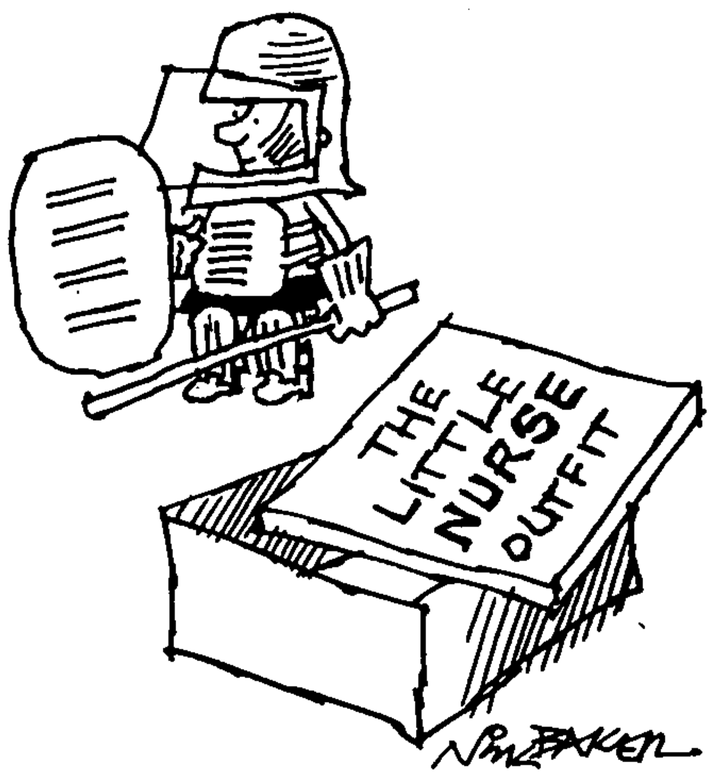
Hilarious! Almost as good as when *Sun* columnist Jane Moore produced the same feature with an identical list of male and female fantasies – on 6 August 1998.

AMONG Fleet Street editors there is no more fervent enemy of intrusive journalism about people's private lives than Dominic Lawson. He declared his creed in a thunderous *Sunday Telegraph* editorial after the death of his friend Princess Diana which demolished the "right to know" argument produced by opponents of a privacy law.

"You do not have the 'right to know' what your neighbour says to his wife in bed at night, however interested you may be in the conversation. You have no right to know... whether he is faithful to his wife, or how much he owes the bank. If you do not have the right to know those things, the press does not have the right to tell them to you."

Yet some papers are still at it. Take gossip hack Adam Helliker, whose column two weeks ago (headed "Ed Stourton Walks Out") revealed that the *Today* presenter no longer lived with his wife and children but was being "comforted" by a female colleague. Similar stories are sprinkled through Helliker's column most weeks.

And who publishes this prurient tittle-tattle? Step forward Dominic Lawson, editor of the *Sunday Telegraph*.



RAPWATCH

THE *Guardian* was inundated with scornful letters following a long article by deputy literary editor Giles Foden which likened Eminem's "dramatic monologues" to those of Tennyson, Hardy, Kipling, Frost, Pound, Eliot and, above all, Browning. "Can I nominate Giles Foden's article as the most preposterous piece of writing we will see this year?" asked reader Simon Pointon. "It may well go down as the longest piece ever to appear in *Private Eye*'s Pseuds Corner."

But to single out Foden's article would be grossly unfair to scores of other hacks who have helped to promote the latest "bad boy" of pop.

The trigger for Fleet Street hysteria came with the release last summer of the single "The Real Slim Shady", which went straight to number one. On 4 July the *Sun* claimed that its "thumping and obscene rants promote drugs, gun-running, torture, incest, murder, rape and armed robbery", while the squeamish *Daily Mail* warned that it would "make parents shudder". Cue for the posh papers to distance themselves from the moral panic of the tabloids. "So creatively audacious... incontestably infectious," wrote Caspar Llewellyn Smith in the *Daily Telerap* on 7 July. "His work can be seriously considered as art."

In the *Grauniad* on 21 October Julie Burchill derided Eminem as a queeny, whining nerd, adding: "A youth culture that finds domestic violence funny and cool is merely echoing the dominant and ultraconservative values of the establishment."

But Eminem's British gigs were approaching, and the lads in the heavies were getting excited. "This was a true punk, the archetypal Ritalin-stoked attention-deficient uber-brat become tabloid superstar," raved Barney Hoskyns in the *Independent* on 16 December. "Is Eminem really just Elvis all over again? Or is he merely a Jerry Springer version of Tupac Shakur?"

The *Sunday Express* posed the Great Question of the Day most succinctly: "Eminem: Poet Or Plonker?" Poet, replied showbiz hack Dominic Utton, who was enraptured by "his technical ability with rhyme and image, the inventiveness of his wordplay, the sheer kinetic energy of his delivery." Comparisons were made with Chaucer and Browning and Shakespeare, "another man who used words as a weapon".

James Delingpole, in the *Spectator* of 13 January, exhumed a different literary ancestor. "The internal rhymes, the mellifluous verse, the vocabulary have more in common with Gerard Manley Hopkins than the rantings of a foul-mouthed yob." *[Shurely Gerard Manley Hip-Hopkins? Ed.]* Fergus Crowe in the *Times Educational Supplement* wondered "Is This Man The New Wordsworth?", and went on to suggest that rap should be used in the classroom "to draw children into a wider appreciation of poetry... They are different colours in the same spectrum – relating personal experience using complex word- and rhythm-based forms of language..."

In answer to a teacher's prayer, HarperCollins has now issued Em's collected lyrics as a handsome hardback (£14.99). Here are some of those complex forms which will help schoolkids appreciate the Lake Poets: *"My baby mama's not dead, she's still alive and bitchin'/And I don't have herpes, my dick's just itchin'... I don't rap to get the women – fuck bitches/Give me a fat slut that cooks and does dishes...Bitch, I'ma kill you! You don't wanna fuck with me/Girls neither – you ain't nuttin' but a slut to me."*

Fahkin' 'ell! Janet Street-Porter, grappling with the big issue in the *Sindie*, could only pose another fatuous question: "It is meant to be ironic, isn't it?"

On 6 February, super-pseud Giles Foden got the G2 cover story. "But who is he, really? Like the Portuguese poet Fernando Pessoa, with his quiverful of pseudonyms, like the coy Eliot of Prufrock, or Walt Whitman's Song of Myself – 'Do I contradict myself? Very well then I contradict myself, (I am large, I contain multitudes)', Eminem is a multiple, elusive experience, one that folds about itself like his near-palindromic name... a rapper whose genius is, principally, poetic." Reviewing Eminem's gig at the Manchester Arena, Michael Bracewell in the *Independent on Sunday* on 11 February raised the flag one more time for the pseuds: "He comes across as a Dylan of the Dark Side, a poet in the Rimbaudian sense..."

But the sound of dissing was growing ever louder. "Just a pop show," (Jeremy Novick, *Express*, 9 Feb); "A very standard rap show... the bottom line is showbiz..." (Dave Simpson, *Grauniad*, 9 Feb); "Hardly lived up to the hype... his mystique has been stripped away", (Akin Ojumu, *Observer*, 11 Feb).

It ain't over till the phat lady sings, of course, and Ann Widdecombe duly obliged. "I do not listen to his music," she trilled. "I've heard it's perfectly ghastly." Not to be outdone, Simon Hefferlump informed *Daily Mail* readers that "it may surprise you to learn that I am not an aficionado of 'rapper' Eminem". Though Heffer sympathised with Em's views on homosexuals, he still found himself unable to warm to "this ghastly man, who looks as if he should be in a secure institution".

Most hacks now seem heartily sick of recycling the same stories about Marshall Mathers III, his litigious mom, his put-upon wife Kim and daughter Hailie; likewise they are tired of asking the same pointless, unanswerable questions. And the pseuds have surely been silenced after seeing their fellow admirers, Eminem's British fans, in the flesh – not a legion of Calibans on the rise, but thousands upon thousands of teenyboppers. A 16-word filler in the *Sun* on 13 February said more about the Eminem phenomenon than any 1500 words in the *Grauniad* ever could: "Rapper Eminem is top choice by girl teenagers for a Valentine's Day snog, a poll found."

POETRY CORNER

Lines in honour of Mr Giles Foden, novelist and *Grauniad* hack. Sent in by Eye reader and rapper P.J. King

Yo! Phat Foden, poetry dude,
Boy! You stupid, cool or rude?
Now! Things with you is well amiss
If what you writes don't take the piss!
Me thinks that tongue is licking ass –
The classic case of middle-class
Ex-Cambridge undergraduate
Feels uptight, inadequate,
So cites this Kant, da Keats with rap –
Best surely though to shut da trap!
Em's in town, Giles takes his chance,
But the only Browning's in da pants!
Respek!

ARCHER IN AFRICA

IN THE TEAROOM

SO they're off. We will all be kept guessing for a while yet whether the finishing line will be 5 April or 3 May, but there's no doubt that Campaign 2001 has begun. In Glasgow at the week-end Gordon Brown was oozing prudence and responsibility, ruling out a pre-election jamboree. That's a sure sign he will come bearing extravagant gifts on budget day. The chancellor learned years ago from his former flak Charlie Whelan that the way to guarantee big headlines for his largesse is to damp down expectations in advance.

And this really will be Brown's election. Since the Conservatives have been naïve enough to tell him where they expect to find the savings to fund their promised tax cuts, it would be remiss of the chancellor not to find that money (if it exists) and spend it in his budget, thus bankrupting the Tory manifesto at the outset.

That manifesto is, in any case, proving dumbed-down, populist sloganising that not even the *Mail* would find fit to print. An embarrassed William Hague promptly took the shadow cabinet office minister off the case and handed the job of writing the final version to David "Two-Brains" Willets who, anticipating what the chancellor is up to, is understandably suffering an acute attack of writer's block.

It is questionable whether Willett's heart will be in it, anyway. He has long entertained a healthy disrespect for his leader's political acumen. In fact it is a source of constant wonder to him that William Hague (whom Willetts regards as little further evolved than a baboon in comparison with his erudite self) is the leader of the Conservative party and he is not.

Labour's manifesto, by contrast, is already quite polished. Onetime Brownite groupie turned Number 10 wonk Ed Richards was despatched some time ago to a cottage in the Welsh marches to think deep thoughts. He came back with tough measures to combat drunken hooliganism, but those were filched by Jack Straw to pad out the Queen's speech last year.

The key features of the Labour document will be more tender, even "child-centred". There'll be baby bonds — every infant to be credited with some cash that will grow to about £2,500 by the time they're 18 — just enough to get in some serious drugs for the coming of age party. Then Gordon Brown will launch his Gladstonian project to "rescue" infants from child-poverty. He claims to have "rescued" a million winsome urchins already and is pledged to "rescue" a million more. The message will be simple: if you love kids you'll vote Labour. If not, you're a Tory bastard.

'Urquhart'

ALASTAIR Campbell's pledge on behalf of the Dear Leader that "new" Labour's plans to bring in specialist schools would sound the end for "bog standard comprehensives" has not only infuriated extreme leftists such as Roy Hattersley. It has enraged studious moderate types, such as David "Read My Lips" Blunkett, the education secretary.

Campbell's outburst to a leprous gathering of lobby hacks last week has made it much more difficult for "Read my Lips" to flog his plans to reintroduce selection to mutinous colleagues. It was hardly surprising then to hear Blunkett dropping Campbell in the proverbial bog as he spoke to Labour delegates in Glasgow at the weekend: he dissed those who referred to "bog standard comprehensives".

However, Campbell does have a better claim than most to have stood up for "bog standard" comprehensives in the past. For as the Dear Leader buckled and sent his children to the grant-maintained London Oratory school, Campbell insisted his own offspring attend the possibly "bog standard" William Ellis School in north London. In fact Campbell is one of the very few surrounding the Dear Leader who has attended a comprehensive school of bog or any other standard.

SURPRISE, surprise! Yet another Labour MP has suddenly announced his "reluctant" decision to take ermine – ie to stand down from the Commons in time for the general election to allow Millbank the space to insert a leadership groupie.

Step forward smoothy chops MP Barry Jones, who has let it be known that he will not be contesting his north Wales seat of Alyn and Deeside in a few short weeks' time. Jones' decision comes conveniently after the deadline that now allows Millbank to draw up a shortlist of wannabes. Such heroic service can surely not go unrewarded.

Meanwhile the immensely cheering news that health minister Yvette Cooper-person is shortly to give birth can in no way harm her husband Ed Balls' ambition to succeed horny-handed son of toil Bill O' Brien in his Normanton seat. All bets are off as to the timing of O'Brien's own "reluctant" decision to retire from parliament.

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

NEWS RELEASE

REED MAKES RAMBLING STATEMENT

JUST weeks after Lancashire police sent papers to the crown prosecution service (CPS) concerning alleged irregularities in the 1997 general election return of West Lancashire MP Colin Pickthall (Eyes passim), from across the Pennines comes more news of Labour's apparent difficulty in getting its sums right at election time.

In 1997 John Healey, now Gordon Brown's PPS, was elected MP for Wentworth in south Yorkshire. His agent, Richard Van Hegen, was also making his general election debut. Before completing Healey's expenses return, he asked the Rotherham elections officer if he might have a look at those of Wentworth's former MP, Peter Hardy, for the 1992 election, to get an idea of how the job should be done. As he went through them he came across a receipt, made out to his own name and apparently signed by him, for cash.

Van Hegen, who had been an ordinary party worker in 1992, knew nothing of this payment. The signature, he concluded, must be a forgery. Further investigation threw up more apparently fraudulent cash receipts bearing forged signatures in other names.

Van Hegen took legal advice, alerted Healey, and went for a meeting with Wentworth constituency Labour party chair Bill Winder to discover how to proceed. When he got there he was confronted by Richard Russell, a Rotherham councillor and JP, who had been former MP Hardy's agent in 1992, and had signed the return of expenses. He raged at Van Hegen and threatened to sue. And Winder refused to accept or act on his evidence.

Van Hegen took the matter up with regional party officer Tony Slatcher, and then with Millbank's former local government supremo Howard Knight, without any result. He resigned from "new" Labour in disgust and so will not be acting as Healey's agent at the upcoming election. Fortunately the MP has been able to find a safe pair of hands to run his campaign — one Richard Russell.

THE memoirs of a former waitress at Cambridge restaurant, the Whim, published as part of Age Concern Herne Bay's "Collection of Personal Memories", give an insight into the youthful ways of Sir Leon Brittan, Tory cabinet minister turned Euro commissioner, and his contemporaries.

"I really loved the place," writes Gwendoline Bowley, who waited tables at the Whim for 20 years. "The students were a lively bunch — many of whom were to find fame and fortune — Nigel Lawson, Peter Cook, Bob Wellings, Clive James, Willie Rushton, Leon Brittan. Leon always seemed a little absent minded. We quite often had to run after him along Trinity Street to remind him that he had forgotten to pay his bill before leaving."

SLOUGH MP Fiona Mactaggart is keen to endear herself to her ethnic minority constituents. She claims in her local newspaper that the recently hard-won reduction in the outrageous fees faced by people from abroad wanting to appeal against a refusal to grant them a visa to visit family members here (see Eye 1017) was all "thanks to the campaign led by backbench Labour MPs".

Except that when the Citizens Advice Bureau tried to find a friendly MP to take the fight against the £500 fees (far more than many would-be visitors could ever afford) to the Commons, Labour backbenchers found themselves with other commitments.

The visitors' unlikely champion was the Tory Sir Teddy Taylor, who tabled the early-day motion that eventually forced home secretary Jack Straw to retreat. True, some 17 brave Labour backbenchers did put their heads above the parapet and voted against the charges. But Mactaggart wasn't one of them: she voted with the government.

'Backbiter'

CHURCH NEWS

WESTMINSTER Abbey's saintly dean Dr Wesley Carr is becoming daily more Maxwell-like in his use of threats to attempt to muzzle unflattering press stories.

The latest crisis to hit the abbey involves its unique 37 pupil choir school, where the headmaster has been accused of bullying and four children have been withdrawn, with more likely to follow. Following a serious complaint in September, Carr commissioned a seven-week internal inquiry. On receiving the report he refused to show it to anyone, including the school's board of "governors", before announcing his conclusion that the alleged incident was the fault of the child and his parents.

A second parent's complaint concerning alleged abuse of his elder son prompted a letter from Carr accusing the 12 year old of "intellectual obscurity" and demanding a signed undertaking from the father not to discuss school disciplinary matters with his child. The parents immediately removed both sons.

The school, meanwhile, is in chaos with almost no new recruits for next year and morale at rock bottom. Last week the choir school's doctor resigned after Carr dismissed his concerns that a worrying number of boys were showing symptoms of stress.

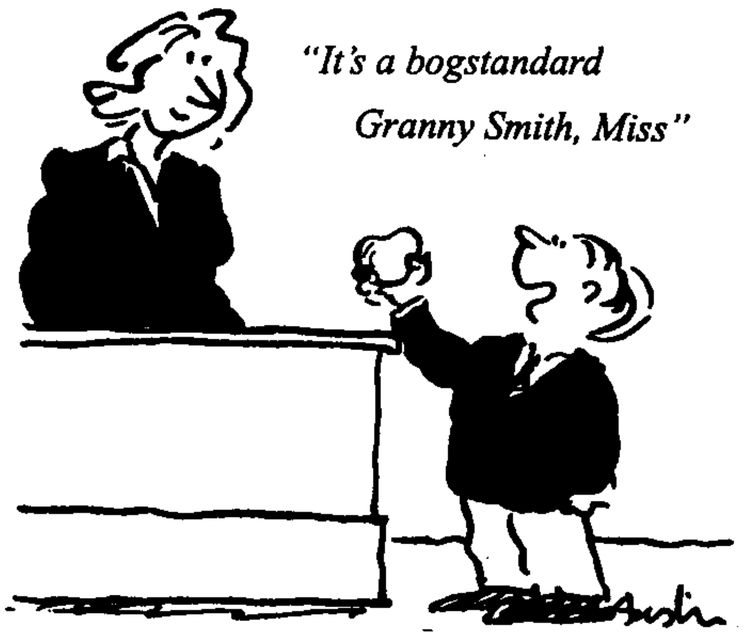
As with his previous exploits (sacking the organist, borrowing money on his own account et al), Carr has been obsessively secretive and was enraged when a number of parents spilled the beans. Following a succession of stories about the school in the press, he has been on the warpath. The Standard, Guardian and the tiny circulation Church of England Newspaper received fierce letters from the abbey's expensive solicitors, Charles Russell, threatening fire and brimstone. All have replied in robust style that there are plenty of witnesses ready and willing to support their stories.

1 Plan where to situate Your Phone

Situate Your Phone close enough to a telephone socket so that telephone line cord will reach. *BT user guide*

JUST FANCY THAT!

STAFF at the ministry of agriculture in Reading with any concerns about the out-sourcing of their computer system to Crapita, a company often featured in the Eye, will have been relieved to receive an internal email on 5 February telling them: "Capita Grosvenor are available for One-2-One cancelling".



"Maybe we shouldn't have put all our customers in one basket"

AD NAUSEAM

"IF YOU could bank a smell, what would it be?" Now there's a tough one. Not, as you might have thought, an extract from the Surrealist manifesto, but the tag for Lloyds TSB's loony new ad campaign.

That particular poster features a fish-shape made up of some lavender, several limes and a nob of sweaty stilton. It might make you think of smells you like. So, thanks to Lloyds, we now know everyone likes different smells. What this has to do with mortgage repayments, cheque stubs and faulty cash-machines remains unclear.

A bona fide lemon, then, if ever there was one. But Lloyds' agency Saatchi & Saatchi can take some comfort in the fact that its best efforts are just laughably stupid, as opposed to repellent or indeed untrue; whereas the Halifax has managed both of the above within a single month.

Its January TV spot for the new Extra current account had an unfortunate staff member performing a lamentable singalong to the tune of Tom Jones' *Sex Bomb*. In the meantime, some people in the background did everything backwards. This may have been a *recherché* reference suggesting, with a nudge and a wink, that Halifax are moving *forwards*, although it may not. The man also sang a duet with a fish. Annoying, patronising, ludicrous and irrelevant: an impressive achievement for a mere 30-second slot.

Not as impressive though, as the slots for Halifax's new direct banking arm, called "If", which, in a rare piece of direct action from advertising's own department of timidity and inaction, the Advertising Standards Agency, was recently rapped for "misleading" customers over its interest rates.

So what's a bank to do? One option is to go all "we're your friends", a bandwagon which Egg and HHCL have jumped on wholeheartedly with their K.I.S.S.I.N.G thing. The only problem being that it's well-known that your bank is not your friend: in general, close acquaintances don't fine you a tenner if you go overdrawn.

Which leaves that rare old thing, honesty – not a popular choice in adland, but embraced in Barclays' recent duds. They received more than their fair share of brickbats for their "Big" ads at the end of last year, in which Anthony Hopkins and a few other celebrities who don't get out of bed for less than a five-figure fee, told everyone that the fact Barclays were a faceless corporate juggernaut (the term they used was "Big") was actually a good thing.

Unfortunately, this bizarre sophistry was released as Barclays closed down branches countrywide and left customers generally peeved. A debacle, you might have said, except that as Barclays announced last week, it has just recorded some very big profits in the last year, leading to big bonuses and big cars for their big boy boardroom. You have to give them a big hand for owning up in their marketing. In a sector where all of the ads are puffery in one way or another, better to have a Barclays giving an explicit V sign than an Egg or a Halifax telling it like it isn't.

JUST FANCY THAT!

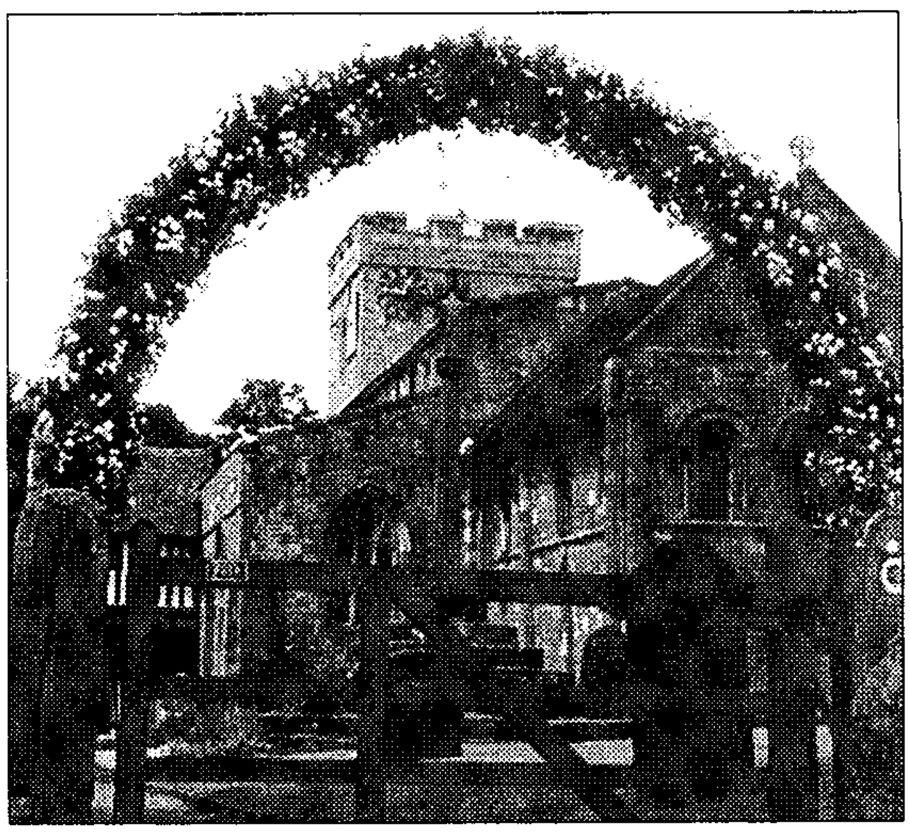
"Alliance & Leicester to buck banking trends with branch expansion plan." — *Times*, 16 February

"Alliance & Leicester shuts branches in £100m cost-cutting drive." — *Independent*, 16 February

NOOKS and CORNERS

"THE Church of St John Baptist, Berkswell, a mediaeval building, is both old and beautiful." So begins a pamphlet describing *A proposal to extend*. This church is indeed both old and beautiful; standing in its ancient churchyard, it is essentially Norman with later editions including a two-storey timber porch. Betjeman and Pevsner both gave it an enthusiastic write up and in the *Buildings of England* volume for Warwickshire, Pevsner & Wedgwood describe it as "easily the most interesting Norman village church in Warwickshire".

"All very well; but the plain fact is that the church is simply not big enough. Poor Berkswell is between Birmingham and Coventry, and rather too close to the latter. Besides, "the architects of old did not have to consider space for church meetings, the teaching of children's groups, fellowship, offices and storage. Recent growth in our congregation at all ages has placed demands upon our building which it is unable to meet."



So the parish has adopted the usual solution: build an extension, just as if the medieval church were a suburban house. This is happening all over England, of course. Here the proposal is to build a new two-storey building right next to the north aisle. No longer will the medieval church be seen standing in its lovely, quiet churchyard, filled with old tombstones, for almost all the north aisle with its Perpendicular Gothic windows, will be hidden.

This will cost some £550,000 of which £400,000 has already been found (it is that sort of parish). The appeal leaflet, *Our need for space*, reproduces the plans by the Brown Matthews Partnership of Warwick. No elevations are given, nor information about materials, but the drawings suggest it is to be a sort of superior scout hut with none of the charm of the half-timbered south porch. On the ground floor will be meeting rooms, a kitchen and boiler room; on the upper floor the parish office and storage space.

Now I do not dispute that more space is needed, or even the claim that "a mediaeval church building, beautiful to regard, uplifting to worship in, is not appropriate as the sole space available to a modern parish". But this is not to be the usual annexe for the congregation to have coffee after the Sunday morning service. Most of the needs to be met in the proposed "Two Storey Development" do not necessarily have to be satisfied right next to the old church, so spoiling it. The educational activities could take place in a separate building, and the parish office might be elsewhere. Berkswell already has a Parish Hall — "recently renovated" — after all. Then there is the rectory which, traditionally, is the heart of the parish. But here we are told: "The sharing of the parochial leadership between clergy and laity makes it no longer appropriate to use the rectory as the focal point for parish administration". Why not?

The rector, the Rev George Baisley, insists that the "calling to reach out in Christ's love is a solemn charge laid on us by God, it is the only purpose for which the church exists." If by "church" he means the church building, he is quite wrong. The Norman church of St John Baptist is a building of beauty and historical interest which belongs to the whole village of Berkswell and, indeed, the whole nation — not just to the active congregation: that is why we have historic building legislation, after all. The church and its churchyard is a place for quiet and contemplation which exists for everyone for more than one reason. But, I agree, it is not a museum: better that it should be used for the purpose for which it was designed.

How difficult it all is. As England lapses more and more into Paganism and atheism, more and more fine church buildings lie unloved and redundant. But there are parishes which are so healthy and active they need to expand — often spoiling the church building quite as badly as redundancy. I do not know the answer to this conundrum, but what I do know is that the answer to Berkswell's needs is to build elsewhere and not to move old tombs to wreck the north side of a lovely church.

SOME of that money would be useful in Braemar, Aberdeenshire — a very different place from Berkswell. Here stands another beautiful church, but it is closed, crumbling, and in danger.

St Margaret's Episcopal Church was built in 1895-1907 and designed by Sir Ninian Comper, that very great ecclesiastical designer who - unlike the Rector of Berkswell - believed that "the purpose of a church is not to express the age in which it was built or the individuality of its design; its purpose is to move to worship..."

The parish struggles. A decade or so back the building was restored, but Historic Scotland — contrary to the advice of the builder and of local people — insisted that the new mortar in the joints between the stones be exactly that which Comper had (mistakenly) used. The result is that the wind and rain have done their worst, water pours in, the fabric is in a worse state than ever and £200,000 is down the drain.

As St Margaret's is a building of rare beauty and distinction, the only hope now seems to be that it is taken on by the admirable Historic Churches Trust, formerly the Redundant Churches Fund.

'Piloti'

POLICE 5

MORE proof that there is one law for the public and another for the police — or their staff.

IT technician Michael Collins has recently, and quite rightly, been ordered to pay £235 in fines and costs and given four penalty points for racing down the A3 at 78mph in a 50mph zone.

Tony Peach, a chauffeur who was also caught in a speed trap doing 78 mph on the same stretch of road at almost the same time, has been let off. But then Mr Peach had Surrey's chief constable Denis O'Connor in the back when he was pulled over. Mr O'Connor, tired after an evening speaking engagement, was apparently asleep at the time.

A Surrey police statement to the Eye says: "The chief constable is of the view that a prosecution should have occurred in this case." So why did he not bring one when he woke up and found out about the incident? And why does he still not bring one as he is entitled to?

"We are not prepared to respond those questions," says a spokeswoman helpfully.

EYE TV

Popstars (ITV)

OH, to be a television executive, plying your questionable trade when no one seems to watch telly any more. True, fat men in vests are glued to Sky Sports, and old dears swear by *Emmerdale*, but many of the middle-class "opinion formers" so highly sought by advertisers have long since abandoned popular TV for the more mundane satisfactions of sleep, excessive work and internet pornography. If they do ever tune in, it's only to throw things at Nigella. As a result, working in some areas of television has become like working for Express Newspapers. No one you meet will ever see anything you do.

Unless, that is, you're working on **Popstars**. Everyone watches *Popstars*. They may not admit it. They may say their children watch it. But only because they are watching it as well. Poor old Sky One once christened their pitiful schedule "Must See TV", but here is the real thing. Even the snootiest opinion formers seem to have formed opinions about it – often very detailed and up-to-date opinions, if underpinned with face-saving hostility. *Guardian* and *Telegraph* writers, in particular, seem incapable of avoiding the subject, even if they are writing about sugar beet production or the latest developments in the Middle East. It's not a show people necessarily approve of, but it's not a show they intend to miss a second of, either.

The story so far: after months of sifting through the nation's talent pool, the judges have finally chosen the five members of the band. Danny, shy mixed-race EastEnder with the golden voice. Myleene, feline session singer, the band's sophisti-cat. Kym, no-nonsense northern girl Harbouring A Great Secret. Noel, beetlebrowed jester who loves his mum. And Suzanne, the sweet blonde one who will soon be saddled with really unflattering hair extensions.

LWT has holed them up in a huge house in the home counties, which ravening hacks fail to find for over a week. They are sent to be styled, photographed, trained, styled again, photographed again. At home they throw pillows at each other as though they have been watching Monkees videos. Nigel Lythgoe, the LWT entertainment supremo, loiters threateningly in the background.

"...and here I am miles from the modern world..."

Over at Polydor Records, the judge with the lantern jaw is trying to hire producers who will supply the bright new young band with chunks of their debut album. Some producers are reluctant. They don't want cameras in the studio with them. Remember this was shot several months ago. These producers are now kicking themselves, whoever they are, if they ever existed, if the bloke with the lantern jaw wasn't speaking into an empty phone trying to create suspense where there was none.

As it is, the band are soon off to Norway to work with chartmeister Hurdie-Ho and his 11 bearded reindeer, whose songs for Steps, S Club 7 and thousands of other useless bands all sound exactly the same. Here, then, is the cutting edge of chart pop: talented singers with appealing personalities compelled to record music of enervating dullness and banality. If it weren't for the tens of millions of pounds they may make in the process, who'd bother?

For some dedicated fans of *Popstars*, though, the best is already over. The selection procedure that occupied the show's first four weeks on air gripped a grateful nation, as first the incompetents and then the mediocre and finally the not bad really were ruthlessly weeded out. Do auditions for bands really take this long? Of course not, but this isn't a documentary, it's showbiz. Any resemblance between this and real life is purely coincidental.

For weeks and weeks Nigel and his fellow judges broke bad news quickly and sympathetically, and broke good news as though they couldn't find it within themselves to break bad news. Each time they wound up their young charges like watches with a series of melodramatic pauses and doleful expressions, all wholly disingenuous. Chris Tarrant has for years held the title of television's greatest wind-up merchant, but Nigel Lythgoe may now have supplanted him.

Next it will be lots of identical number one singles for the band – and for the viewer loads more series exactly like *Popstars*.

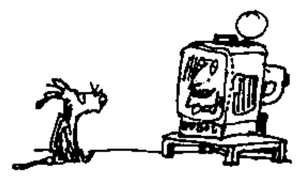
'Couch Potato'

SPLIT personalities

Bob Moore

Lenny Henry Ford

MEDIA NEWS



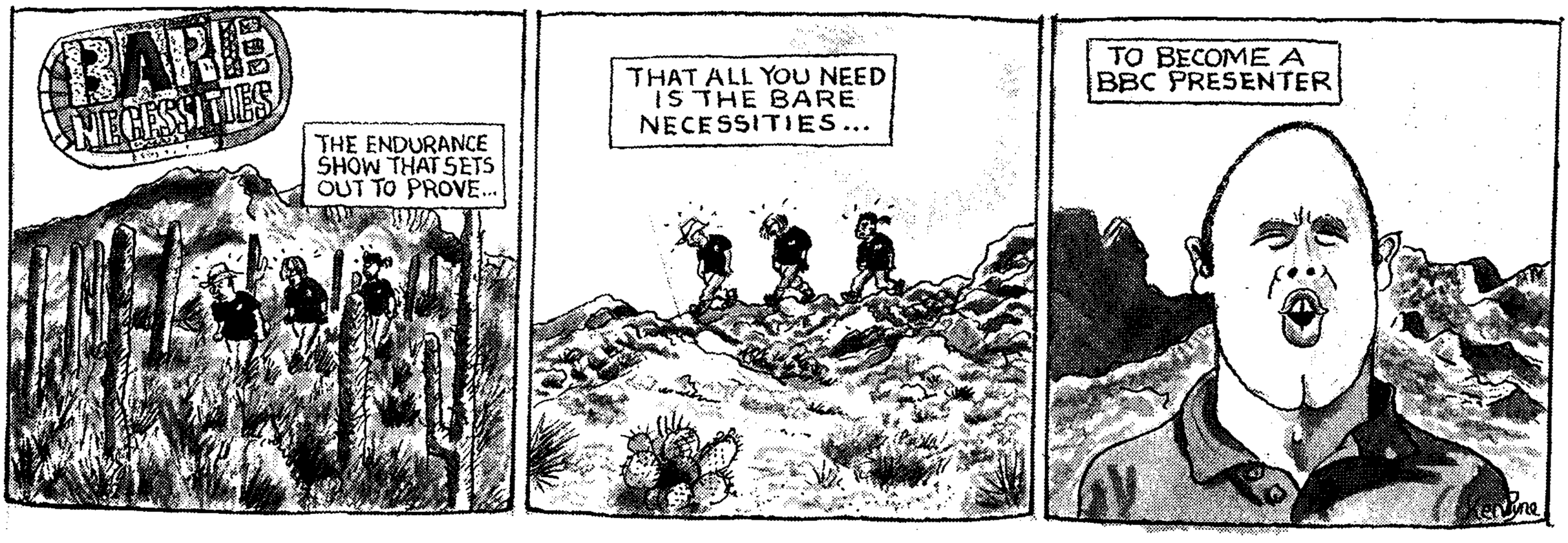
THE BBC's news business editor Jeff Randall may not take up his post until next month, but he has wasted no time in letting his plans for Auntie's financial coverage be known.

He recently addressed business reporters on where they're going wrong, declaring his ambition to have more top businessmen on the *Today* programme. He told hacks that at present they are declining to come on the show for fear of being "monstered". Whether Humphrys, Naughtie and Co will play ball remains to be seen.

One person at the Beeb who has taken the new business-friendly agenda to heart is assistant director of news, Mark Damazer. When BP announced its whopping end of year profits on 15 February, Damazer circulated a memo telling staff not to mention arresting statistics – such as that the company is generating more than £1m an hour. After all, he pointed out, BP is a global company working in a global marketplace. Vast profits are only to be expected.

CULTURE secretary Chris Smith is holding a consultation process on the BBC's plan to invest £313m in four new digital channels over the next two years.

One document the corporation will not want Smith to consider is an internal memo revealing the average viewing figures of its existing digital channels. Between October and December last year, BBC Choice, BBC Knowledge and BBC News 24 put together attracted a whopping 1.6 percent of the digital audience.


BARE NECESSITIES
THE ENDURANCE SHOW THAT SETS OUT TO PROVE...
THAT ALL YOU NEED IS THE BARE NECESSITIES...
TO BECOME A BBC PRESENTER

GORGEOUS, pouting Juliette Binoche briefly made the BBC's News 24 worth watching when she was interviewed by arts correspondent David Sillito following her best actress Oscar nomination for Chocolat.

Binoche's looks and fluency in English so mesmerised Sillito that when he asked the Gallic beauty about her rival's chances of beating her for the Oscar, he referred to the star of Erin Brockovich as "Juliette" Roberts.

And as the sweating, bespectacled hack was doing his final piece to camera before handing back to the studio, those few viewers who actually watch Phews 24 were treated to the sight of a giggling Binoche waving behind an unsuspecting Sillito — much to the amusement of those in the studio who have since been unable to cope with the demand among colleagues for a copy of the tape.

OH, YEAH?

"I'm absolutely delighted. Mrs Thatcher conquered America and now I'm going to have to go," she said.

– *Anne Robinson on* The Weakest Link*'s forthcoming move to the US (*Guardian, *10 February 2001)*

WHEN Greg Dyke paid a morale-boosting visit to the Panorama unit last month, following the current affairs show's move to BBC2 and subsequent loss of ratings, he emphasised that he was not seeking higher audience figures but greater "impact".

Just a few days later the broadcasting standards commission (BSC) upheld two complaints made against a Panorama investigation by reporter Matthew Hill into the treatment of children with ME.

In "Sick and Tired", broadcast on 8 November 1999, Hill worked on the theory that doctors who think children suffering from the fatigue-inducing condition should be rehabilitated back into everyday life are in the wrong. He concentrated on one practitioner, Dr Mike Prendergast, who has treated child sufferers of ME at Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) and Birmingham Children's Hospital, against whom Hill ranged the differing opinions of other doctors and the woeful tales of patients and their parents.

Hill omitted to mention some rather crucial points, however. These were outlined in the BSC report, including the fact that Dr Prendergast's methods are those generally accepted as the best form of treatment by the British medical profession; that a survey into the experiences of parents quoted in the documentary was actually drawn from an unrepresentative sample, the militantly anti-rehabilitation charity, Action for ME; and that while Hill and his interviewees repeatedly described the children's wards overseen by Prendergast as locked, the children could let themselves out.

The commission also found that the programme's use of an unlabelled reconstruction of one child walking down a ward using a Zimmer frame and its use of "dark" imagery "left viewers with a less favourable impression than was warranted". Could it be that Hill's failure to present the evidence in a balanced manner resulted from his desire to make an "impact"? Greg Dyke should take note..

GOING LIVE

"LIVE to Margaret Gilmour at Victoria station," said Peter Sissons, cueing an item on the BBC's *Ten O'Clock News* (9 February) about the Cahors summit and the decision to allow British immigration officers on board Eurostar trains.

Whoops! Gilmour was, of course, at Waterloo station, a busy taxi rank behind her in shot. "The new agreement," she revealed, "will drastically reduce the number of illegal immigrants arriving just here behind me." By taxi?

DUMB BRITAIN

Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? ITV

Chris Tarrant: Which of these is the title of a Shakespeare play?
a. As You Like It
b. As You Love It
c. As You Wish It
d. As You Want It
Contestant: Er... I don't know, Chris. Can I phone a friend?

The Weakest Link, BBC

Anne Robinson: Which musician famous for playing the piano honky-tonk style died last year?
Contestant: Elton John.

Robinson: Which bird is on the Australian flag together with the kangaroo?
Contestant: Wallaby

Steve Wright in the Afternoon, Radio 2

Wright: What is the capital of Australia? And it's *not* Sydney.
Contestant: Sydney.

SON OF BIRT?

"An empirical and evolutionary approach, coupled with a better understanding of our customers, will enable the news team to re-assess the true value attached to specific kinds of output so that, if warranted, we can then structure ourselves to deliver those outputs which bring the greatest possible credit to BBCM's diverse (and increasingly multimedia) news service overall. My slogan for 2001 must now be: 'Let's give delight!'"

— Internal memo at BBC Monitoring by self-styled news-guru ***Grahame Perrie.***

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

AT THE end of last year, when the Musicians' Union voted out its longstanding general secretary Dennis Scard and replaced him with the little-known but voluble Derek Kay, it was to the accompaniment of promised muscle-flexing.

Kay described his surprise victory as "something that might be seen as desperation" at the soft direction of the union. But that soft approach was over, he insisted. In future the MU would be doing more to protect its members' livelihoods. And true to his word he has kicked off with an all-out assault on the freedom of promoters to fill British performance venues with cut-price Eastern European orchestras.

One of the main purveyors of east-west cultural trade, Victor Hochauser, is currently touring the Moscow City Ballet round the UK, and its performances were meant to be accompanied by a Russian band of 30-odd musicians. Hiring the whole lot as a package, argued Hochhauser, was both artistically and practically the best course. And the department of employment agreed with him, which is why the band members were granted work permits. But then the MU went into action, claiming that the players should be British. And behold, the permits were revoked — just a few days before the company was due to arrive.

Inspired by this success, the other union that represents musicians, Equity, is toughening up its act as well. It has set its sights on maverick, man-of-the-people promoter Raymond Gubbay whose sprawling new Aida opens at the Royal Albert Hall this Friday. Gubbay has always refused to recognise Equity as a negotiating body. He generally tries to keep it out of his affairs. And he won't use its standard contracts.

So Equity is now on the attack — and working so hard to infiltrate the Gubbay organisation that Mr G reportedly took the bizarre step the other week of locking Aida cast members in a rehearsal room for their own "protection". As one of them subsequently commented: "This is supposed to be high art we're dealing with here. If you ask me, its turning into panto."

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'

Pseuds Corner

London rain often feels like piss, because it hasn't too far to fall from the lowering sky. The London pedestrian finds himself crawling along the gutter-like streets, while some down-and-out deity pisses on him from a modest height. Or so I thought, dropping into Boots to buy an apple-flavoured breakfast bar. I munched it under the pediment of the political bookshop and sucked in a desultory fashion on a roll-up with the approximate length and density of a feline penis.

WILL SELF
Independent on Sunday

The whole idea of Queercompany is really making a distinction between what is gay and what is queer. We like to think that queer includes gay, lesbian, transsexual, all the permutations. Gay doesn't really do that.

DOMINIC RICHARDS
(co-founder of Queercompany.com)
Daily Telegraph

One question which no one has addressed is the spiritual suffering of those deprived of hunting. Ann Mallalieu said words to the effect that hunting was poetry, literature and music. She was right. Hunting is all these things to those who understand and love it. Those affected by a ban on hunting will suffer as surely as any civilised person by a ban on music, art and literature.

JULIA PICKLES
Letter to the Spectator

We are philosophy, you and I. Platonist dreamers and Aristotelian realists, seeking hidden and ultimate truths yet methodical, cautious, reliant on our senses. In our Graeco-Egyptian fortress, we shelter Euclid Galen and Ptolemy, whilst the Roman architects of our destruction beat down the doors. Epicurus, you cultivate my garden, and I, Democritus in my soul, fear not a Stoical death. Love is all, my sweet – you, a lady mid-twenties, and me older only in body. It is Heaven. And it is ours.

Personal column, London Review of Books

In a twist on traditional classical music performances, the 1000 attendees to the [GSM mobiles phone conference] Gala

Awards will be invited to leave their mobile devices switched on to enable their ring tones to form an integral part of this innovative performance. If you carry a mobile telephone you have a music machine in your pocket. The winning symphony will utilise this technology to create an integrated and unique piece of music.

Trade mailing despatched by Chorleywood Consulting advertising 'The Chorleywood Telephone Symphony'

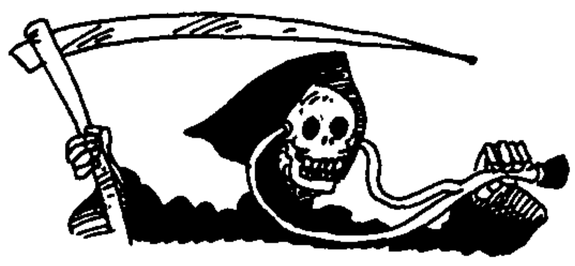
Tina Brown, Chairman & Editor-in-Chief, Talk magazine, invites you to TALK'S BAFTA PARTY co-sponsored by Burberry.

Talk invitation

● PLUS nearly everything written about Eminem *(see Hackwatch)*

CONTRIBUTORS: R.W. Barltrop, B.D. Mooney, M.G. Sherlock, Nicola Allerton, Geoffrey Kelly, Gnome.

£10 paid for entries



DOING THE ROUNDS

WHY is health secretary Alan Milburn so reluctant to publish the results of the Bristol inquiry?

Although the inquiry's latest press release claims that the final report will be delivered to the department of health by the end of March, sources at both the DoH and the inquiry team have confirmed that it has been sitting on Milburn's desk for the last *two months*. Cynics might suspect there is an election coming up...

As M.D. pointed out in the last *Eye*, the report is likely to make unpleasant reading for regional health authorities and the DoH, which have thus far escaped censure for the fiasco. Despite clear evidence that the Bristol unit had very poor results, the DoH continued to fund the unit without investigating why. It was way back in 1992 that the *Eye* first brought the situation to the attention of two health secretaries by name (William Waldegrave, the constituency MP for the Bristol Royal Infirmary, and Virginia Bottomley) to no avail. Many of the DoH officials who might have been expected to act are still in office.

However, a more telling excuse for delaying publication is the report's financial implications. Having been given the remit to make recommendations to prevent Bristol-type tragedies happening again, the likely cost in terms of personnel, resources and quality assurance could add as much as 5 to 10 percent to the NHS budget.

Given that "new" Labour will almost certainly fail to meet Tony Blair's pledge to raise NHS spending to European levels, a further financial burden in an election run-up would be most unwelcome.

When the inquiry "confirmed" that its report will be on Milburn's desk by the end of next month, it cautioned that "the timing of publication is a matter to be arranged between the inquiry and the government. The secretary of state for health will require time to consider his response." Er... quite so: and probably just enough to get him through the next election, no doubt.

● MILBURN is under the spotlight too over clause 59 (now renamed 62) of the new health and social care bill – one of the biggest bits of nonsense to come out of his department in recent months. It appears to make independent scrutiny of the NHS a criminal offence.

This is bad news for M.D., who has long campaigned for an independent medical inspectorate free from the NHS brotherhood; but it also threatens academics, patient and consumer groups who will risk a £5,000 fine if they do spot checks on hospitals or clinics or measure the effect of treatments.

Milburn is seeking powers to control publication of reports into doctors' workloads, patients' waiting times, infection rates, conditions in hospitals and the quality of care. Under the act all such studies would be banned unless permitted by the minister. The clause may be completely unworkable but it is a clear indication how desperate "new" Labour is to control bad news about the NHS.

● CAROLINE RICHMOND, who had her womb, ovaries, fallopian tubes and cervix removed by a gynaecologist without her consent, has risked a £5,000 fine (*see above*) by constructing her own league table of NHS performance based on a news media internet search of the terms General, Medical, and Council, and then several named, hospital-based medical specialities between 1994 and January 10, 2001.

The number of "hits" scored was as follows: bacteriologist, 0; dermatologist, 0; gynaecologist, 57; Haematologist, 0; obstetrician, 17; orthopaedic, 1; paediatrician, 2; radiologist, 3; and rheumatologist, 0.

She then searched for evidence that the GMC, the royal colleges or the government were doing anything to protect patients from errant gynaecologists and found very little. From the results of the GMC hearings she was, however, able to conclude that "the GMC appear to be particularly lenient towards male consultants from fashionable London teaching hospitals".

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

NOW that the European union (EU) is encouraging states to put real money – sliced from farm budgets – into conservation on farmland, how should it be spent: on trying to restore and revive ruined landscapes or ensuring that well-preserved features remain that way?

Of course the questions are too simple; some of the money is rightly spent rescuing valuable but neglected habitats, such as under-grazed chalk grassland. But the two flagship government-funded schemes, Countryside Stewardship (CSS) and Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA), are both heavy on restoration. And the serious downside is highlighted by the tale of two farms, both recently in the news.

The BBC called Ley Coombe in Devon "The Farm That Time Forgot" when it documented this jewel of traditional management; a living vision of the wildlife-rich world we have lost. But the farm has just been refused CSS entry for the second time, despite its faultless environmental credentials. Or rather, *because* of its faultless environmental credentials. One requirement of the scheme is that the plan should "represent a positive change in management", which pretty much rules out anyone who is doing a good job already.

Compare this with Ashcombe Farm on the South Downs outside Lewes. This is the type of farm which has made the chalklands of the south lifeless arable deserts. On Ashcombe Farm an October rainstorm caused massive erosion which washed away the topsoil and crops on 220 acres of 1 in 4 hillside. Frightfully bad luck, of course, but then, "this field had been under arable cropping for as long as I can remember and it had always suffered a bit of erosion". Ploughing steep hillsides inevitably causes erosion every year; but "a bit of erosion" is farmerspeak for, "Well, it'll see me out."

However, this farm is in the South Downs ESA, which means the lucky farmer, having cashed in his soil for a huge return in high cereal prices and arable aid over many years, is now claiming £130/acre/year from a grateful nation to manage his land as grass again.

Not all cases are so clear cut, and nor should MAFF take a moral view on conservation issues. But countryside minister Elliot Morley is deeply embarrassed by the Ley Coombe affair because he has said that such farms ought to benefit from CSS payments. But it seems there is more joy in MAFF over the sinner who repents than over the righteous who never strayed.

'Gumboot'

SIGNAL FAILURES

Focus on bargains

IT was too much to hope that the rail industry would be sufficiently shocked by Hatfield and the ensuing chaos to organise a universal fares deal to apologise to passengers.

Many operators wanted to wait until Railtrack's panic attack was over, around Easter, before making a coordinated fares offer. That echoed the views of Chris Green, chief executive of Virgin Trains, when he appeared on *Newsnight* after Hatfield to bemoan the fragmentation that was wrecking the railway. Could this be the same Chris Green who, in recent diary extracts published in the *Sunday Telegraph*, decides Virgin should "press ahead with a big marketing idea" and pops the idea to Richard Branson?

British Rail's fare offers, like the Boots and Intercity two-for-one deal 10 years ago, were simple to understand and the tickets readily available. But people hoping to buy Virgin's half-price tickets this month must first unravel a Gordian knot.

The deal looks simple on paper: all Virgin tickets are half price. But which ones are Virgin tickets? One *Eye* reader thought it was a safe bet that if he travelled from Leeds to Chesterfield on a train with "Virgin" written in huge letters on the outside, the ticket would be half-price. The guard soon set him straight: the ticket he wanted was not a Virgin one and not discounted.

Passengers on Stagecoach's South West Trains might think the Virgin deal applies to them, since Stagecoach owns nearly half of Virgin Trains. But SWT has its own discount scheme to add to the confusion.

Indeed, thanks to privatisation there is no easy way for passengers to tell if a train fare is one of Virgin's or not. Commuters accustomed to using Virgin services from Milton Keynes are denied the half-price tickets they expected because Silverlink sets their fares. London to Pwllheli is a Virgin fare although more than half the journey is on Central Trains. The only trains from Oxford to Winchester are Virgin's—but the fares are controlled by Thames Trains (except for Apex tickets, which are Virgin's).

No wonder there have been long queues at ticket offices and staff at the rail inquiries helpline have struggled even more than usual to give correct information. No wonder people have tried for 24 hours without success to buy tickets from Virgin's overwhelmed telesales.

Gatwick Express

A normal service is running today

Cancelled

Time	Route	Due
0930	Victoria-Gatwick	1000
1020	Gatwick-Victoria	1050
1130	Victoria-Gatwick	1200
1220	Gatwick-Victoria	1250

Ceefax 2 BBC Travel

Many people who do buy half-price Virgin tickets will use non-Virgin trains. Other operators could lose significant income because of Virgin's offer while gaining none of the credit for benevolence. Those operators could, in theory, club together for a promotion without Virgin after Easter; but Virgin's routes are so widespread that passengers would be just as confused as now.

If the railway can't pull itself together even for such a superficial activity like a ticket promotion, what hope the long-term goal of coordinated safety, operations, connections, maintenance, training and research?

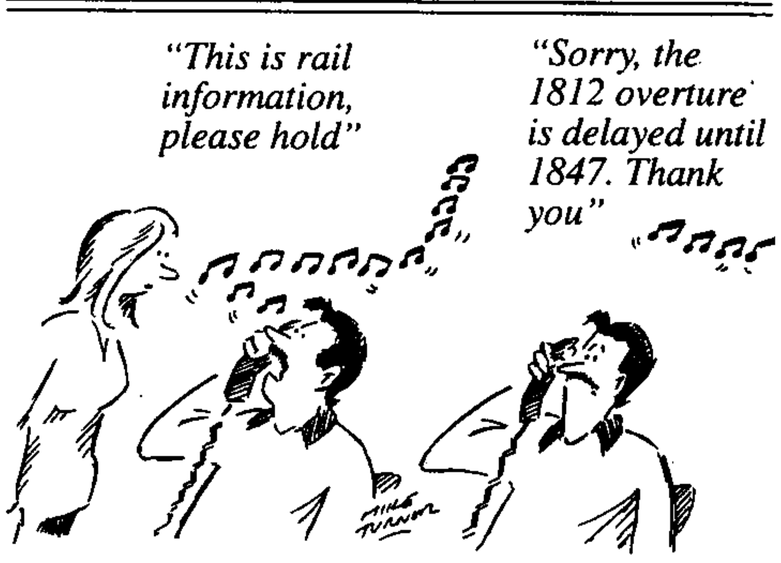
● BIDS by GNER and Virgin for the east-coast franchise are not the only ones the strategic rail authority has suspended: it has also decided the bids it received for Central Trains were too poor to progress.

Negotiations for the east-coast line were suspended ostensibly because Railtrack has bumped up the cost of upgrading the tracks, but probably because it is politically expedient not to make a choice before the general election.

The bad news is that GNER passengers must continue to suffer the current operator, which refuses to order new trains unless its franchise is extended (*Eyes passim*). The suspension of both franchise negotiations shows the SRA has no strategy and is wasting companies' time and money (see last *Eye*).

The good news is that a measure of quality has been applied for the first time since rail privatisation. The Tories and "new" Labour were so blinded by their dogma that travesties like Railtrack and Prism Rail were given a free rein. Anyone who looks at the situation objectively, as the SRA seems to have done, will immediately see the current system for the expensive nonsense it is. Having acknowledged that that system can't come up with the goods for the east coast and Central, the SRA would logically produce a strategy for reforming the system, principally by renationalising Railtrack. Before that happens pigs will fly – as will lots of cheesed off train passengers.

'Dr B. Ching'



ROTTEN BOROUGHS

THANKS A MILLION

BROMLEY council has scored another embarrassing own goal in its battle to build an ugly multiplex cinema plus burger bars and giant carpark on Crystal Palace park (*Eyes passim*).

On 8 February seven Bromley bignobs including chief executive David Bartlett and borough secretary Walter Million turned up at the appeal court anticipating a landmark victory over resident Diane Barker, who had challenged the way Bromley had granted itself planning permission for the hideous scheme. Bromley's counsel Gregory Stone QC had assured the officers there was but a "slim" chance of defeat. Their smiles faded as Lord Justice Dyson granted Barker a full judicial review.

Arguing that Bromley had breached European law on multiple counts by failing to require the appropriate environmental impact assessment (EIA), Barker's counsel Robert McCracken homed in on borough secretary Walter Million. He took the court back to the key council meeting of 6 May 1999, when three councillors had pressed for an EIA — and were ignored. The transcript of the meeting recorded the chairman asking the borough secretary for advice. "My legal advice [is] that it is not open for you to demand a formal statutory [environmental] assessment," Million had said. So the council didn't.

The case could go to the Lords and the European court of justice, and is likely to set a planning precedent for local authorities.

● MORE dirty tricks in Durham, where cobbler Tony Martin has been waging a one-man campaign against the city's rotten Labour regime (*Eyes passim*). On the eve of a local BBC Newcastle TV documentary last week about his battles with the council, Martin, who has survived false allegations that he is a drug dealer, threats that his legs would be broken and phoney gay contact ads giving his address, found that hackers had placed an explicit lesbian sex scene on his website (www.Cobblers2thecouncil.tsx.org). Experts are studying the picture — now removed — to see if they can recognise which local Labour party members volunteered for the steamy snap.

TAKING THE PISA

A LETTER from Beacon of Sleaze leader Colin Wedd to Doncaster's diminishing number of unconvicted Labour councillors, dated 29 January, warned: "We are now likely to be facing an early general election. We must therefore be careful as a group to have a show of unity amongst ourselves and our approach to issues to enable our MPs to ensure maximum support for a successful election giving us a second term."

Within days Wedd announced that he was seeking £800 from councillors for a five-day, er, fact-finding mission to Pisa to attend a race meeting. The council, he said, was looking for advice on developing the area around its own Town Moor track.

Wedd followed this publicity coup by announcing a rent rise of 7.9 percent for council tenants and the sacking of 280 deputy wardens in old folks' homes. The man is clearly a rare campaigning genius. Labour need look no further in its search to fill the gap left by Mandy.

● SO FAREWELL, then, Howard Knight, Labour's local government supremo (*Eyes passim*) who has suddenly decided to quit, er, to spend more time with his children just weeks before a general election and with no new job lined up. The fact that Knight got nil support from his political masters in the squeaky clean party for his half-hearted attempts to clean up the Augean stables that are Labour's northern councils had absolutely nothing to do with it.

GONE WEST

THE gloves are off in Lancashire, where ambitious county council deputy leader Frank McKenna (*Eyes passim*) engineered the deselection of the Labour council's chair of finance, Chris Cheetham, just a week before council leader John West announced his retirement.

In his budget speech last week Cheetham announced one of the lowest council tax rises in Britain, without any cuts in front-line services. Despite his success Cheetham had to go because he stood in the way of McKenna, who hopes to replace West as leader. McKenna is clearly unembarrassed by the fact that the CPS is still studying a police report which names him in connection with "financial irregularities" in the West Lancashire constituency Labour party, first revealed in *Eye* 987, including evidence of forgery in the 1997 general election return of local MP Colin Pickthall, whose agent McKenna was.

HOT WATER

AT LEAST the dome opened on time. That's more than can be said for another great millennium commission (MC) disaster: the new thermal spa building at Bath.

This white elephant is already nearly three years behind schedule and costing more than twice its original budget. Council taxpayers are funding half its total £24m cost so far, yet no one can be sure it will ever be finished.

The lure of MC cash led the Lib-Dem council to abandon a more modest proposal which would have cost £7m and been in keeping with Bath's Georgian architecture. Now a Nicholas Grimshaw-designed glass cube is being built within 200 yards of the Roman Baths and within sight of Bath Abbey.

The MC promised to pay half the original estimated cost of £12m, but has already had to cough up another million. Total costs are now projected at close to £30m by completion in October 2002 — on a project that was meant to open in January 2000.

The council recently suspended standing orders to reappoint a mysterious Dutch Antilles-based company, TDC, as its chosen private operator. Councillors decided to ignore the fact that TDC has twice failed to come up with its £5m share of the project. Nervous officers and councillors are now keeping fingers and toes crossed that the commission will still stump up its £7m stake. That's by no means certain. The men and women who threw money at the dome are seeking advice from the treasury, for fear of landing themselves in thermal water.

Meanwhile council tax bills are set to rise by 6 percent this year, on top of a 9.4 percent increase last year. £2m of this of this, plus a £10m windfall from selling off council houses, will be swallowed by the cube. By an extraordinary coincidence, clearing the backlog of repairs to all the council's schools — which will not now happen — would have cost, er, £12m.

■ *Is there a millennium flop in your area? Please let us know.*

● IN issue 1018 we reported that independent Falkirk councillor and UFO enthusiast Billy Buchanan had once claimed to have been abducted by aliens. Cllr Buchanan writes to say that, while *The Scotsman* newspaper may once have "printed an article with a photograph of a UFO that I [took] with my video camera and I did say that it was 'as big as a battleship'" there is no truth at all in the story that he had claimed to have been abducted. We are happy to make this clear.

High Principals

CRITICS who accuse UK universities of dumbing down need sneer no more. Queen's University in Belfast is setting up an educational resource which will have Harvard and Yale screaming with envy: the world's first Kenneth Branagh archive.

To ensure this academic gem is properly maintained Queen's is advertising for a full-time Branagh archivist at £18,732 a year. The job description explains: "Kenneth Branagh, the Belfast-born film-maker, has agreed to donate to the University photocopies of his papers relating to his films. The University wishes to appoint a suitably qualified person to create a full and accurate electronic description of the contents of the archive."

No doubt future generations will appreciate this enlightened decision to preserve photocopies of Ken's letters to Emma and Helena, as well as the dry-cleaning bill for those ketchup stains on Ken's codpiece.

PRIVATE companies are already rubbing their hands in glee at the thought of the money to be made when the funding of colleges is switched from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) to the new Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in April.

Last year international investment giants Bridgepoint Capital bought Protocol Associates, a company which provides IT services to the FE sector, and more importantly the parent company of Education Lecturing Services (ELS). Regular readers will know that ELS is the agency which specialises in supplying lecturers to 50 percent of England's FE colleges on short-term contracts, thereby side-stepping some of the annoying and expensive intricacies of employment law.

In October 2000 Protocol, backed by Bridgepoint, acquired three training companies, Tektra, Harnsea and Step Direct. Tektra provides learning material for City and Guilds courses in IT, while Harnser and Step Direct specialise in training for the petrol retailing sector and the retail and food industry respectively.

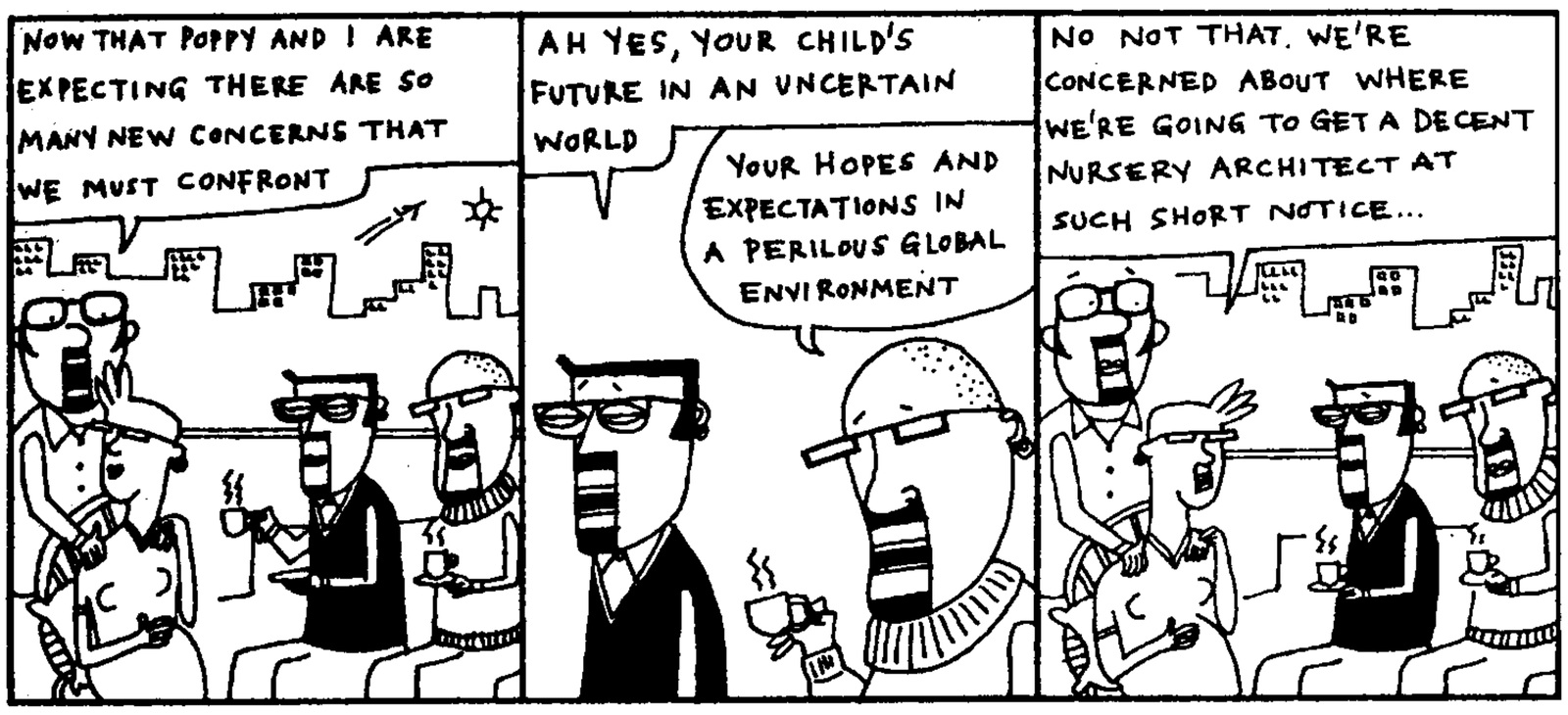
Anyone in any doubt about the direction in which "new" Labour is taking FE need look no further than Protocol's self-professed mission statement: "To become the UK's largest provider of education services."

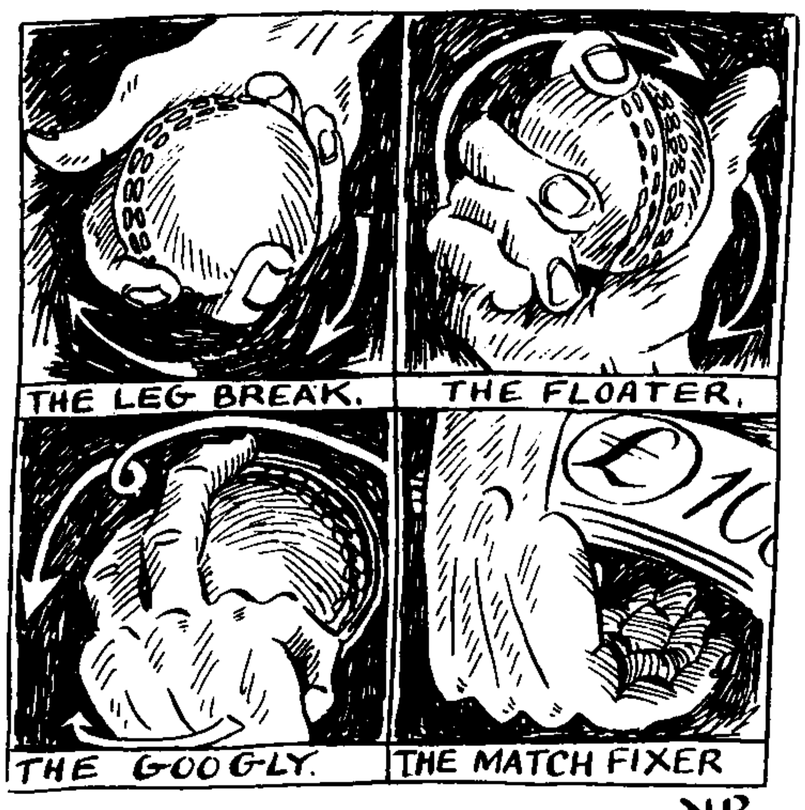
IN THE last *Eye* this column reported the problems faced by the acting chief executive of Barnsley College, Michelle Squires, who was struggling with a huge financial deficit at the college and an FEFC investigation into serious allegations by whistleblowers. Since then the chair of the college corporation, Roy Hilton, has taken a sensible step towards improving the college finances.

While chief executive David Eade is still off on paid sick leave after one year, Hilton has now suspended his two former henchwomen, Squires and Ann Oldroyd (see *Eyes passim*) on full pay while the FEFC and the college continue to pursue their investigations.

IT'S GRIM UP NORTH LONDON

KNIFE & PACKER


NOW THAT POPPY AND I ARE EXPECTING THERE ARE SO MANY NEW CONCERNS THAT WE MUST CONFRONT
AH YES, YOUR CHILD'S FUTURE IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD
YOUR HOPES AND EXPECTATIONS IN A PERILOUS GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT
NO NOT THAT. WE'RE CONCERNED ABOUT WHERE WE'RE GOING TO GET A DECENT NURSERY ARCHITECT AT SUCH SHORT NOTICE...



The Skills Of Cricket

WORLD OF SPORT

THE UNSEEMLY public spat between two of Britain's greatest ever runners — Sebastian Coe and Linford Christie — caused a few ripples last week.

Coe took time out from the Tories' election poster campaign to describe Christie as "boorish" and to suggest that the sprinter was lucky to get off a drug ban when he first tested positive in 1988. Christie, as is his habit, responded by suggesting that any criticism of his behaviour was inspired by racism.

But perhaps if Coe took some of his own sporting duties as seriously as being William Hague's judo sparring partner – particularly in light of his alleged ambition to chair the International Olympic Committee — he might have been able to embarrass his fellow Olympic gold medallist more publicly.

Coe has been president of the Amateur Athletic Association (AAA) since November 1999. Yet since then he has not attended its annual meeting, nor has he found time to be present at its outdoor championships, a cause of much muttering by the blazered officials who spent a dull weekend in Birmingham.

Perhaps if Lord Coe had turned up at the AAA indoor championships in the city last month, he might have been able to prevent Christie – then still banned from competing because of his steroid use — from being treated like a guest of honour and asked to present medals to the winners in one of the races.

NEWS of the BBC's signing exclusive rights to televise the next fight of heavyweight boxing world champ Lennox Lewis was greeted with particular glee by the *Grauniad*.

The paper's boxing reporter made much of how the corporation would be able to deliver an audience for the fight perhaps 10 times the size of that which Sky Sports might expect for a similar no-contest (Lewis' opponent in April, Hasim Rahman, is a gap-filler while the world champion waits for the major pay-day for facing Mike Tyson).

Lewis was quoted by the *Guardian*'s John Rawling, as was the Beeb's head of sport, Peter Salmon. But nowhere in the extensive puff for the Lewis fight did the piece mention Rawling's day job: as BBC Radio's boxing commentator.

Letters

Private Eye

Porn crackers

Sir,

Square Eyes' dismissal of Channel Four's "Better Sex" series as pornography in the guise of sex education was sloppy, unprofessional journalism. "Better Sex" was a well-made, professional and informative three-part documentary on Relate's psychosexual therapy service. Square Eyes offers a casual and unpleasant insult to everyone who took part by describing it as "Blind Date" with Latin terms. If he has watched the whole series then he has missed its point comprehensively. If he has not, then he is unqualified to dismiss it so derisively. Is too much television making him go blind?

Yours truly,
JOHN PEARCE,

Tyne and Wear.

Ruffled feathers

Sir,

As a butcher's son I can eviscerate and dismember almost any animal. I have drawn the line at owls but I might make an exception should I come across that Owl of the Fourth Remove (aka the journalist formerly known as Prince) who spread the false story that I had shot one of his lovely namesakes, as reported in the Street of Shame.

Contrary to your report, I had no need to mount an investigation, "Clouseau-style" or otherwise, because Bunter gibbered a panic-stricken admission of guilt as soon as I told him that I would sue him were the lie to appear.

BRIAN BASHAM,

London NW3.

Lookalike

Carpenter

Gadaffy

Sir,

Have you noticed the strange resemblance between Colonel Gadaffy Duck and the Carpenter from "Alice in Wonderland"?

I wonder if their crocodile tears might be genetically related?

Yours oysterly,
LOUIS HELLMAN,

London W3.

Court out

Sir,

I love Piloti, but this week he is really unsupportable (architectural joke). I had just come back from visiting the new Great Court at the British Museum on a high and read his screed.

1. The vault must be one of the great vaults of the world, right up there with Kings College Chapel, Cambridge etc.

*2. There is **plenty** of space in the Great Court for gaggles of school children, Japanese tourist groups...*

*3. Retail outlets are **not** "in your face" but quite tastefully tucked away. The BM is free, after all.*

4. The whole space has a very "classical" feel to it being completely symmetrical. Maybe not in the Summersonian sense, but then we are in the 21st century, right?

5. "The new shiny floor has turned out to be some two inches (sic) higher than plinth level... the effect is disgusting (sic)." Oh, get a life.

What we have is a fantastic, beautiful and stunning new space, created from a courtyard previously filled with rubbish and cluttered with shacks. I know which I would prefer.

Yours sincerely,
BEN GOODGER,

Oxford.

Shot in the dark?

Sir,

You seem unsure [Eye1021] of the reason for Mike Watson's venomous defence of MMR when there could be links with bowel disease and autism. I don't know about autism, but my wife suffers from Crohn's Disease and the doctors are always complaining about the huge expense of her drugs. I think that answers the question.

NIALL CONSIDINE,

Via e-mail.

Chile pepper

Sir,

Your recent Letter from Chile has reached this 5-Star Ranch. Here Emma Thompson, your distinguished leftie actress, has been "researching" material for an anti-Pinochet play. Why does she and your man in Chile (reporter) not leave the Pinochet problem to our excellent legal system?

Better for these critics to compare our successful low tax, high investment economy, based on Reagan-Thatcher economies, to your Blair-Brown octopus of ever higher taxes and socialist regulations.

Let them compare our litter-free streets, our clean Underground, our smart police on the beat, with London's shabby treatment of its citizens. You want to ban fox-hunting, we hear. Better by far for your future to "Ban Blair".

Yours faithfully,
L.A. NATALON,

Patagonia.

Right track

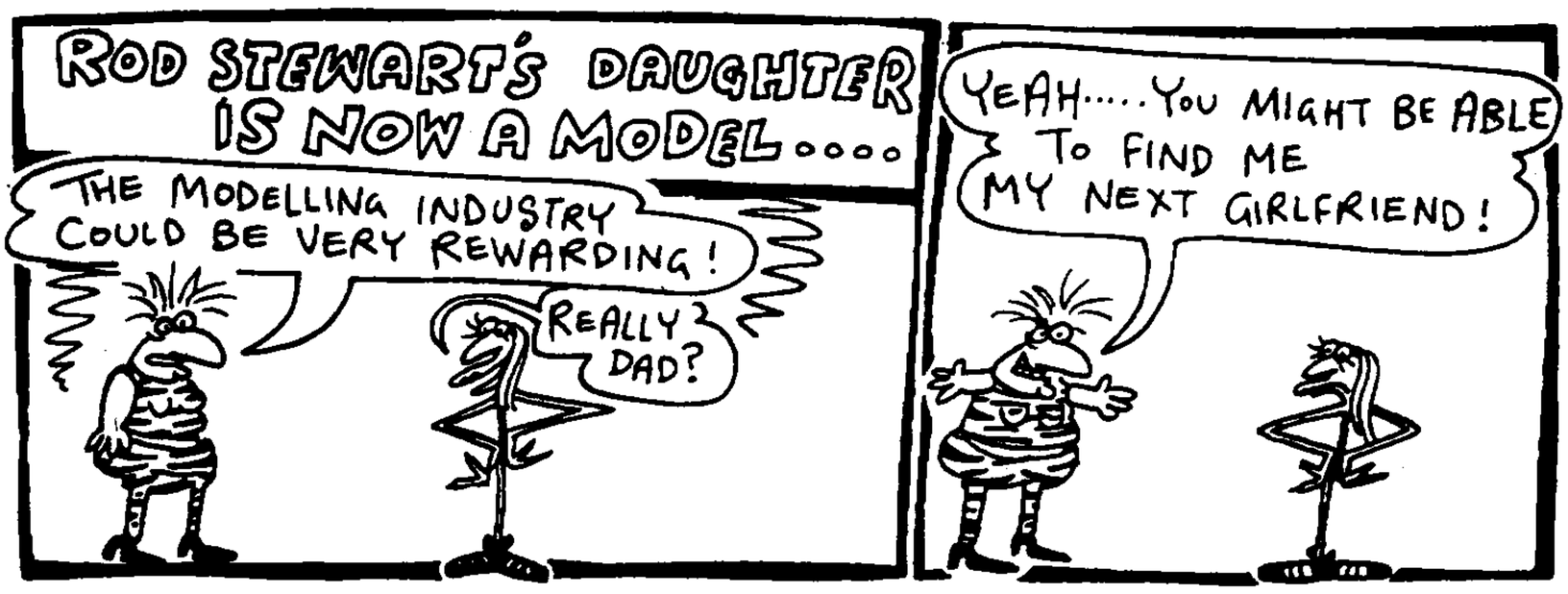
Sir,

The Railway Development Society has a proud history of fighting rail closures and campaigning for better rail services and for new and reopened lines. We appreciate the help we get from Dr B. Ching in Private Eye.

After Hatfield and the consequent crisis of confidence in the industry, rail passengers need stronger and more professional advocates to speak up for them. As a voluntary group, we aim to be the

SUPERMODELS

KERBER


ROD STEWART'S DAUGHTER IS NOW A MODEL....
THE MODELLING INDUSTRY COULD BE VERY REWARDING!
REALLY DAD?
YEAH.....YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO FIND ME MY NEXT GIRLFRIEND!

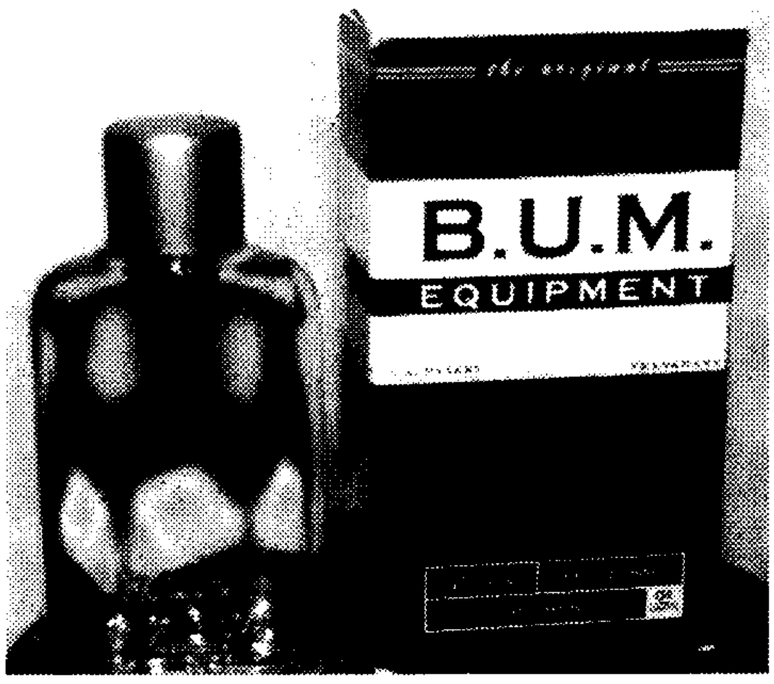
LUVVIES

"I need to feel people are giving me love. I put out so much love through my work that I feel I have earned the right to expect love or respect in return."

STEVEN BERKOFF
Teletext

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

I-SPY *USA*



Submitted by Daniel Johnson. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

consumer voice for rail travellers, campaigning for good service and the lowest possible fares.

Currently we are trying to boost our membership. Any Private Eye readers who join RDS in the next month (from date of publication) will get a free 96-page illustrated book worth £6.95 (A to Z of Rail Reopenings). Annual membership includes four copies of Railwatch magazine. They need to send a cheque for £17.50 (payable to RDS) to Membership Secretary, 13 Arnhill Road, Gretton, Corby, Northants NN17 3DN and quote AZPE.

RAY KING,

Vice Chairman RDS (and Private Eye subscriber).

Lookalike

Bloke on telly

Anaïs

Sir,

Have any other readers noticed the extraordinary resemblance between Noel Gallagher and Meg Mathews's daughter Anaïs and that bloke who appears with Paul Merton on the telly? I wonder, can they be related?

Yours,
ENA B. HISLOP,

Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Auberon Waugh's Complete Diaries

The correct website address for online ordering is **www.commonreader.com**

Mad hatter

Sir,

Regarding the picture of my son Richard Tomlinson, "The Art of Spying" in Private Eye 1021, I would like to point out that all the pictures used by the press of him wearing "The Hat" were taken in 1990 when Richard represented the United Kingdom in the Camel Trophy – Siberia USSR '90. The British pair came third and Richard won the Routemaster award. Since 1990, "The Hat" has been here in Cumbria, and in recent years has been used on the scarecrow!

Incidentally the PCC are planning a Scarecrow Exhibition in May in the village, and hope to raise at least £1,000 towards church repairs. "The Hat" may make a reappearance!

Yours sincerely,
JEAN TOMLINSON,

Carlisle, Cumbria.

Doh-m

Sir,

Following the news that M. Gerbil wants to take over the Millennium Tent and run it as a tourist attraction, will he need planning permission for change of use?

Keep laughing,
STEVAN HEZSELTINE,

Via e-mail.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

Bob Wilson: *What about George Graham's record – seven trophies – that's second only to Sir Alex Ferguson.*
Andy Townsend: *That's right, Bob. George Graham's record is second to none.*
ITV
(Stuart Eyles)

"And there's Gregor Townsend's knee, looking very disappointed."
GAVIN HASTINGS, BBC1
(Rob Hill)

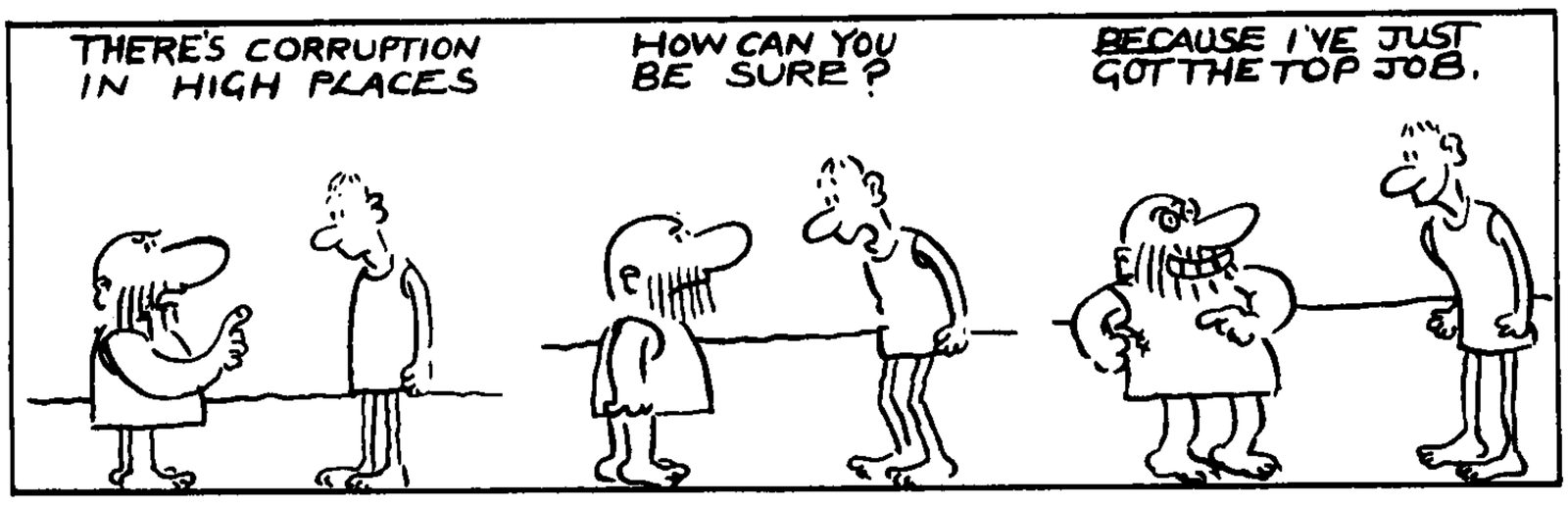
"They've conceded a lot of goals but their other problem is they've let a lot in."
GARY LINEKER, BBC1
(Hugo Palmer)

"And now the only band named after a motorway – A1."
JOSIE D'ARBY, BBC2
(Richard Jolley)

"Bobby Robson and Sven Goran Eriksson had a meeting before this match. Kieron Dyer will have been the name on two of their lips."
Metro Radio (Newcastle)
(J. Simpson)

HOM SAP

AUSTIN



Letter from **Istanbul**

from Our Own Correspondent

SEEING red in Turkey's parliament may have fatal consequences, our top psychiatrists concluded this month. The debating chamber's "strong red seat covers" create a "confrontational, tense atmosphere", while the layout of the white marble rostrum is also "disconcerting", decreed Mehmet Bekaroglu, a deputy and former head of Black Sea University's psychiatry department.

So, when deputy Fevzi Sihanlioglu staggered out of the assembly early in February to drop dead in an anteroom following the worst brawl between politicians in years, the point was well made. Sihanlioglu had apparently intervened in an ongoing fistfight between a surging mass of government and opposition deputies over controversial amendments to limit the powers of the opposition. Parliamentary video cameras and national TV viewers then watched as he was repeatedly battered by two members of the hard-right government coalition group, the National Action Party (MHP).

Pulled from the fray, he then stumbled out of the chamber to collapse from a heart attack. Unfortunately for him, parliament's medical team, well equipped with cardiac equipment, had all gone home hours before and locked the dispensary. This left only Osman Durmus, our heavily jowled and supremely warted health minister, to administer the kiss of life.

When the news reached Sihanlioglu's home town of Viransehir in the south east, the response was swift and fitting for a parliamentary democracy angling for European union membership. Members of Sihanlioglu's clan, who number most of Viransehir province, swore blood vengeance on the MHP deputies and tooled up for the eight-hour drive to Ankara.

Sihanlioglu was not just another deputy, you see, but the clan chieftain himself. "We will kill them, sons of whores," said one local politician, who seems to have misunderstood the principles of spin doctoring required for full membership of the Euro club.

The promised bloodbath was averted when the two MHP deputies were arrested and charged with manslaughter, and Sihanlioglu's party, the opposition DYP, sent party workers to Viransehir to prevent a convoy of 40 vehicles reaching Ankara to "settle things".

Which all goes to show how important it is to listen to the advice of a good shrink. The nation's politicians were hopefully listening too when another psychiatrist, Professor Ozcan Koknel, also went public recently – this time to praise the therapeutic affects of anti-corruption drives. "Catching and convicting criminals is important for increasing and sustaining society's self-confidence," he told reporters.

There are currently 14 countrywide investigations under way into corruption, ranging from Operation First Curtain, which is looking into embezzlement of state funds by the national theatre directorate, to Operation White Energy, which is probing dodgy energy privatisation deals.

The latter has revealed a range of bribery scandals over energy distribution contracts, reportedly implicating deputy prime minister Mesut Yilmaz and his energy minister Cumhur Ersumer. It has also reportedly caused sweaty palms in the board rooms of some western energy companies, particularly over last year's abortive Turkish nuclear power plant tendering.

Questions are being asked about where US$345,000 of "personal gifts" – mostly in bundles of US$100 bills – may have come from. Investigators found them lying around the house of state electricity board director general Muzaffer Selvi.

Returning to the question of therapy, the professor had some further sound advice. "Once started, the operations are supposed to be concluded," he said. "Situations of desperation, hopelessness, inconsistency and individual and societal depression would appear if they weren't."

Almost on cue, the investigations then began to be stomped on. First the military were blamed, as part of a plan to "discredit civilian rule". Following a threatening outburst from the generals, though, ministers accused the CIA and then the Germans. Baffled, the White Energy chief prosecutor Talat Salk then made the mistake of requesting that the EU, IMF and World Bank send him any files they might have on corruption in Turkey. This was the final straw for prime minister Bulent Ecevit. He denounced Salk and put him under investigation too.

All of which must provide food for thought in parliament, particularly when deputies look out on the mass of aggressive, red leather chairs – themselves, we hear, also subject to a somewhat unorthodox tendering process.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

COMPILED BY **VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH**

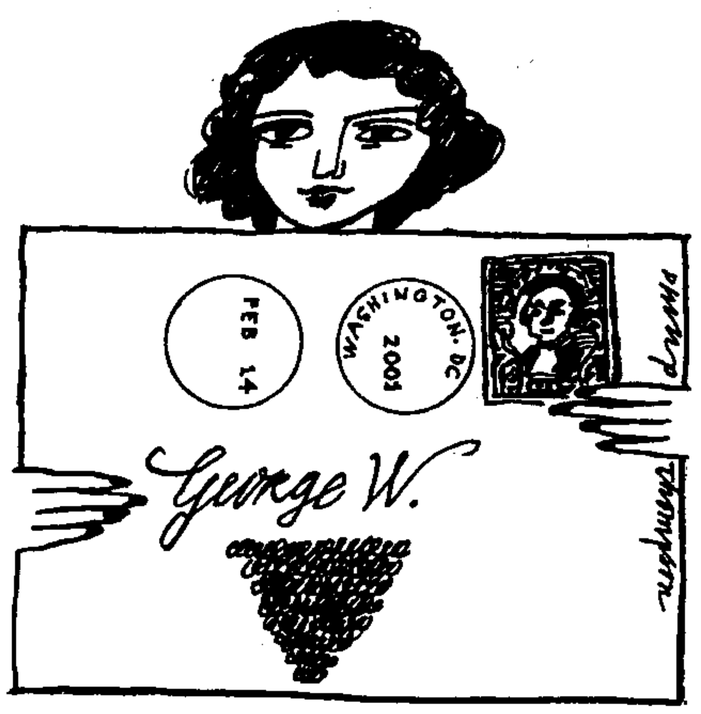
● *"We regret to announced that the popular Yorkshire singer Jeff Johnson has collapsed and died of a heart attack while performing onstage. It happened during a tribute concert for Geoff Raddings, who had himself collapsed and died during a benefit concert for the British Heart Foundation a few weeks earlier.*

"Johnson was appearing, along with a number of other artistes, at the Crystal Club in Bailey, West Yorkshire, shortly before Christmas. He had just finished singing Raddings' favourite number, 'You're More Than Life To Me,' when he collapsed. Attempts were made to revive Mr Johnson, but he died before reaching hospital.

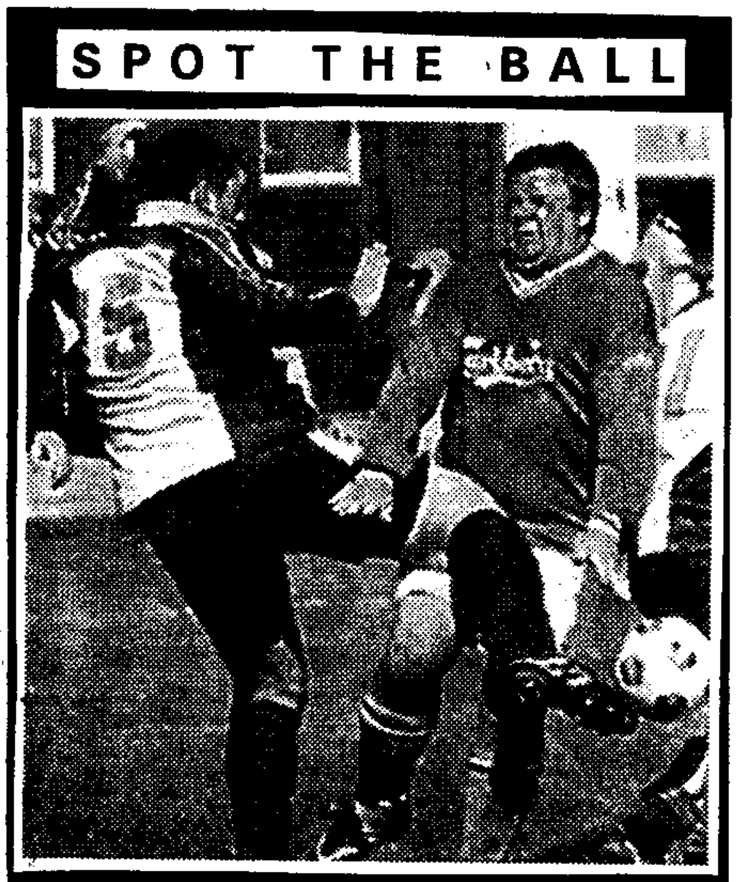
"Before the show, a cheque for £1,000 had been presented to the British Heart Foundation by Mr Johnson's wife Margaret, and Raddings' widow Shirley, who were both present in the audience during the concert. Margaret Johnson said later, 'Jeff would have chosen to die this way, instead of being ill for a long period of time'." (The Stage, 11/1/01 Spotter: Strobes)

Highbury & Islington Express

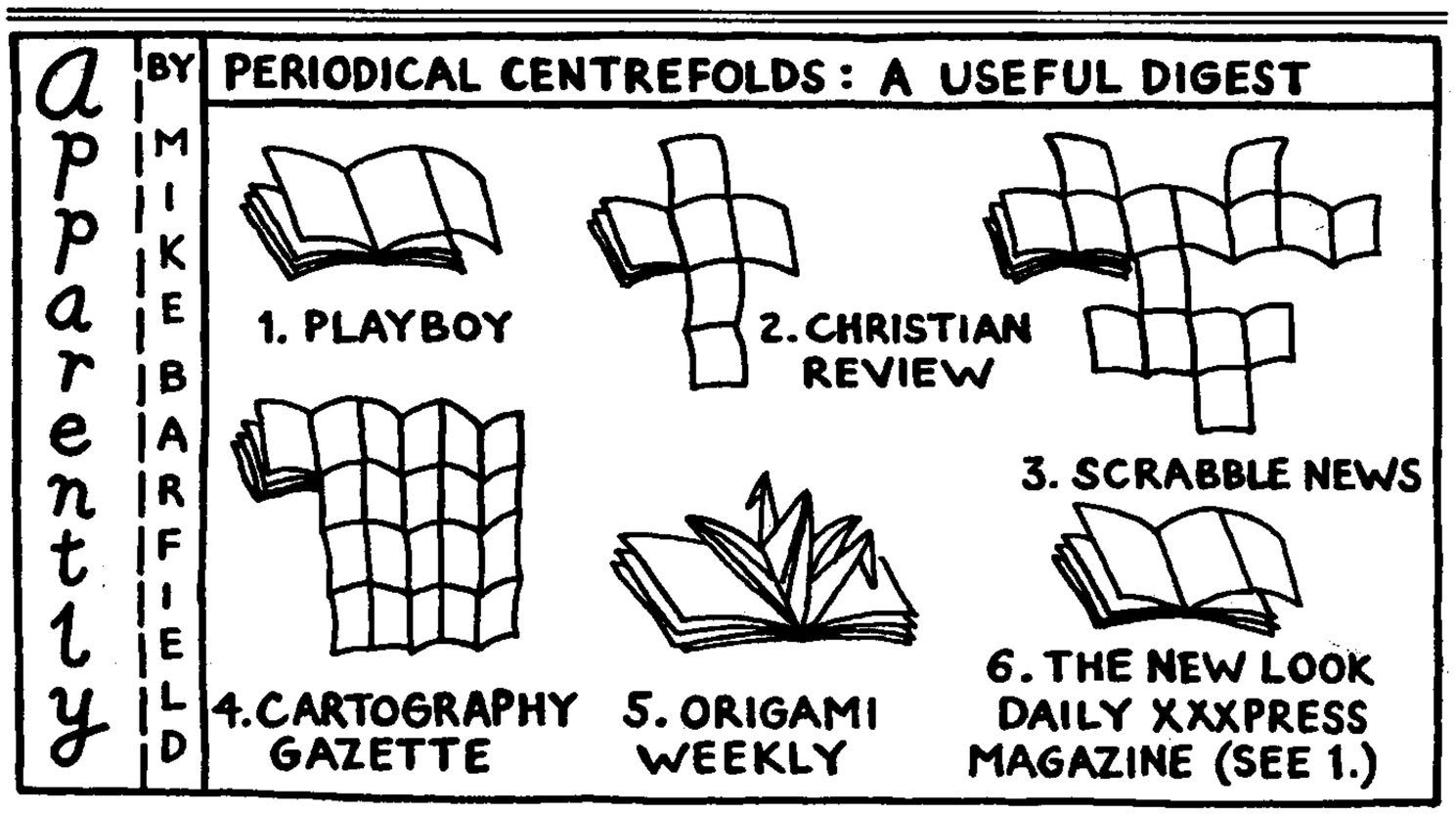
● **"I was so angry about the fraudulent election of George Bush, that I just knew I had to do something to protest," Emily Hofsetter told viewers of her 'Silicon Sally' cable tv programme in California, "so I decided to issue a very personal call to arms. Chanting 'no more Bush, no more Bush' is all very well, but we need more direct and radical political action than mere slogans if we're going to attract the attention of the national media. That' s why yesterday I shaved off all my pubic hair, and mailed it to the White House in an envelope, as a form of protest. And that's why I'm now asking all those viewers who believe in democracy to follow suit, by joining my 'I'd Rather Go Bare Than Have Bush' campaign. Shave off your pubic hair too, mail it to Bush, and show your contempt."** (Brisbane Q News, 12/1/01. Spotter: Norm Reynolds)



SPOT THE BALL

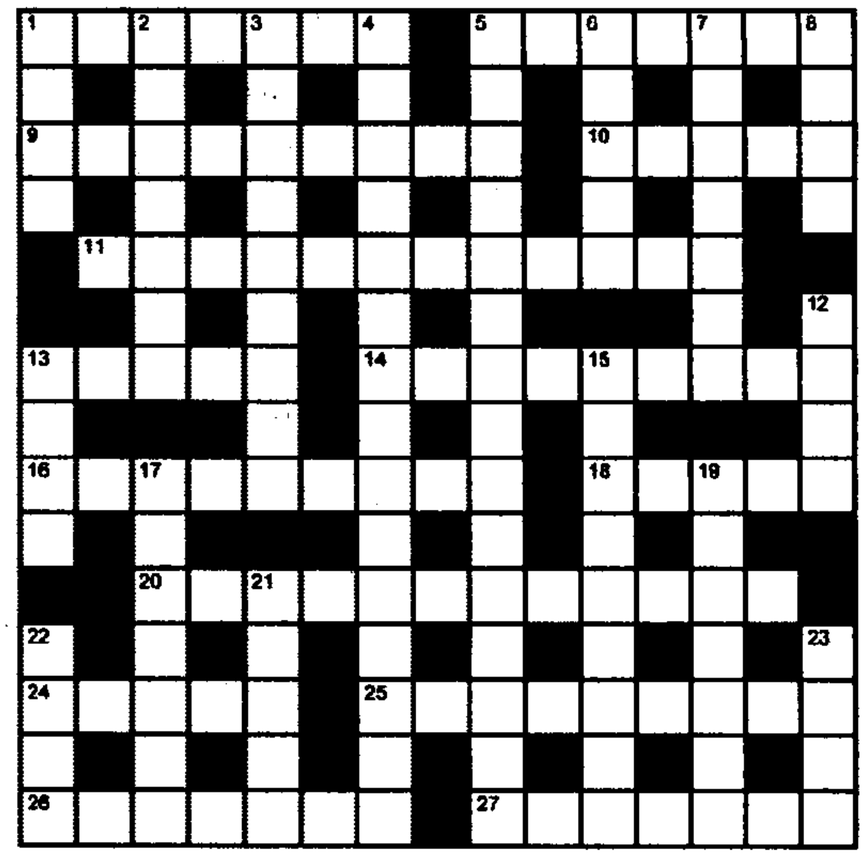


Wells Journal



EYE CROSSWORD 177

by Cyclops *£100 prize*



ACROSS

1 That's not possible, Bob, love, outside of prison (2,3,2)
5 Sex urge at first makes you intellectual (7)
9 Clinton type, keen on uninhibited head and ecstasy – the common folks' leader (9)
10 Management despot's caught dead short (5)
11 What Mandelson's getting good at – accepting the inevitable sponsorship capital? (12)
13 Mandy lacks interior regard? Bollocks! (2,5)
14 Short jumpers on the First Lady (large) start to titillate the president (9)
16 Give relief on having an erection, then unstiffen (7,2)
18 Stuff received (5)
20 "TV sound on quick, Brenda!" – studio aid (12)
24 Hard to understand thug (5)
25 Stupid sod in a giant woolly going in for a bustle creation (9)
26 TV time for the faithful Lord's crowd (3,4)
27 Colonel soundly fortified by delicatessen cereal (7)

DOWN

1 Flipping Yelland and his pointless rag exposed (4)
2 Take part of corrupt MEP in bed with European head (7)
3 Sloppy, climax-releasing boudoir habit not without guts (9)
4 Member put in another bed – initial success if heart, say, is in the right place? (5,10)
5 Choice oath increasingly heard from the politician these days (8,7)
6 Walk round in a flaccid state in important company (5)
7 Altogether unseemly enema straddling a vessel (2,5)
8 Brown and all that foreign money shit (4)
12 Egg on jug (4)
13 Spot the undercover type (4)
15 Arse up, on Ecstasy, pissed is not how Hague sees us (9)
17 Be an egg and have some rumpy-pumpy (3,5)
19 Description of Brenda's mate makes one cringe (7)
21 "Topless artist breaks up Little and Large – true!" (5)
22 Bonk (or perhaps you'd prefer smoke)? (4)
23 A leader's no leader, getting the sweats (4)

£100 prize to first solution opened on 2.3.01. Entries to 'Crossword', Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN.

Solution to Crossword No. 176

Winner: F.T. WEBSTER

ACROSS: 1 Bilateral 6 CAMRA 9 Ovulate 10 Ulysses 1 Jimmy Riddle 12 Sun 13 Blurb 15 Geriatric 17 Cohabitee 20 Kicks 22 UDA 24 Liposuction 26 Mr Magoo 27 Amblers 28 Denim 29 Loyalists.

DOWN: 1 Blow job 2 Loud-mouth 3 Toady 4 Reeking 5 Launder 6 Clydebank 7 Moses 8 Arsenic 14 Bubble-gum 16 Receivers 17 Club Med 18 Topsoil 19 Ecstasy 21 Sinuses 23 Adman 25 Cabal.

Exclusive to Private Eye

THE GREATEST LOVE STORY EVER TOLD

by **ENID RANCID** *(as told to Sylvie Krin)*

CONTINUING the sensational memoir that has warmed the hearts of millions who haven't read it...

THE MOMENT my BBC boss Desmond Wilcox put his hand on my knee and said "How would you like to do a feature with me?" I knew I was in love with him.

Of course he was married, with a family. But love transcends all barriers.

Dirty Des

And I knew that our love was written in the stars. The minute he whispered to me "I could give you your own programme at peak time" I knew that he was the man for me.

Of course I felt sorry for his wife Patsy. But she had only herself to blame for not wanting to be on television like me.

She did her best, certainly. But how could she hope to compete with a woman like me?

A woman who was destined to give the world "Golden Hearts" and hold up carrots shaped like men's whatsits.

I could only feel sympathy for this miserable woman who could never accept that I was The One.

She even tried to get her own back on us both – by dying.

But our love triumphed regardless of this spiteful act. We were to enjoy thirty years of blissful peak-time appearances.

Child Lying

And even on his deathbed, Desmond still put me first. Despite being on a life-support machine with bio-medics giving him heart massage, he was still able to go out and buy me a bunch of chocolates for Valentine's Day.

"That's life!" were his last words as he planted a passionate kiss on my tear-stained cheeks.

No wonder they are calling this the greatest love story of the century.

TOMORROW: I make up some more rubbish.

© Dame Esther Wilcox 2001

World of Soccer

FOOT'S SVEN PLEA

by **El Erewego,** Our Man With The WAP Mobile And The Copy Of *Asian Babes*

THE SOCCER world was rocked to its foundations when Neasden's newly appointed Swedish-born supremo, Sven Goran Knee, 59, moved into the hot seat at "The Bridge", vacated by his legendary namesake, the man they called simply "Big Ron".

Speaking in perfect English, the ashen-faced boss from the land of smorgasbjords pledged to put the Squirrels back on the footballing map of world soccer.

And his credentials speak for themselves. Only last week the man they call football's Mr Ikea took his Italian squad Nazdio to the bottom of the Fiat Punto league.

The Magnificent Sven

But as Big Sven picks his new-look squad, there are fears that there will be no room for the old hands. Said veteran net-minder one-legged Wally Foot (94) "I would like Sven to know that I am the goal-keeper I was when I was 70. My best years are still ahead of me."

And Neasden fans (Sid and Doris Bonkers), have voiced doubts about the Scandinavian mastermind. Says Sid "He looks just like Ron talking in a funny voice. The Volvo doesn't fool us either."

Sven Knee is 59.

Late Score

International friendly

Baghdad Academicals 4
(Pevsner o.g. 4)

AFC Neasden 0

Bombs stopped play

Reprinted from The Sun

ART'S DIRTY OLD MAN IS DEAD

by **Art Staff**

COUNT Balthasar Cossowski de Rola, better known as Balthus, has died at the age of 92. With his provocative pictures of teenage popsies ***(cont. p 94)***

THAT BLAIR ELECTION MANIFESTO IN FULL

1. Crackdown on drug dealers

2. Paid Paternity leave for three weeks

3. Er...

4. That's it.

3. Because I am passionate about restoring our rights in the workplace. With the tide turning in our favour thanks to the new Fairness at Work legislation, I will put all my energies into the Union's campaigns to restore our rights, and low-pay and job insecurity.

Themon Djaksam's NUJ Election address

PHWOOAR
PICTURE LIBRARY
Cripes Corporal! We're going to see some action at last!
Too right! It's always the army who does the dirty work!
WAPPING
For you Tommy, the war is over!
Hands up! A bit That's lovely.
Don't shoot until you see the whites of my thighs!
Lummee! This is the front we're interested in!
Join the army and see the News of the World!
NEXT WEEK: It's court-martial time for the slappers (surely 'sappers' Ed)

ST ALBION PARISH NEWS

Incumbent: Rev. A.R.P. Blair MA (Oxon)

Hullo!

Well, there's one person you certainly won't be reading about in my newsletter this week, and that's Mr Mandelson (or Peter, as he used to be known in happier days).

I think we've all heard quite enough about that gentleman for a lifetime, so I can assure you I won't be wasting any more time worrying about him and his sad mental decline!

Let's not mince words about this, shall we? Poor Peter has gone mad, and we all have a duty to do what we can to ignore him.

Personally, I was more than prepared to forgive him for being sacked, and to overlook his many acts of disloyalty and dishonesty over the years, had it not been for his truly disgraceful behaviour at our recent Diocesan "Mission 2001" launch.

Everyone had been looking forward to my major address outlining all our exciting new plans for the parish over the next 10 years.

I had spent a lot of time working on what I was going to say – I don't just make these things up on the spur of the moment, you know! – and I was going to explain in detail my thinking on how we could really deliver on all our promises to make the parish a more vibrant, inclusive, transparent and, let's face it, fun place to be. And what happened? No sooner had I begun speaking than there was this disturbance outside.

There was shouting, rude words, stones being thrown at the windows, and an unpleasant chant of "Vicar, vicar, vicar, out, out, out", led by none other than our poor, sad, demented former Churchwarden.

Although I attempted to continue

valiantly with my talk, I could tell that the attention of the audience had been distracted by the noise outside.

And over coffee and biscuits afterwards (thank you to Mrs Brown for the organic oatmeal cookies!), all the talk was of "mad Mandy" and what an appalling example he set to the young people by his melodramatic tantrums.

I do not wish in any way to prejudge the impartial investigation which is being carried out by my good friend Mr Hammond into Mr Mandelson's behaviour.

It will be entirely up to him to decide one way or another that Mr Mandelson was guilty of all the things we said he was.

But, until then, we ought all of us to remember the words of Our Lord, "Let he who is without, let him not cast stones at those who are still within" *(Letter of St Antony to the Mandelsonians).*

So, let's hear no more about Mr Mandelsonian in this newsletter or anywhere else!

We've got a future to build, and we've all got to play our part (except for you, Peter, obviously!).

Yours,

Tony

Parish Postbag

Dear Sir,

May I, through your columns, give a very warm and heartfelt thank you to all those parishioners who sent me such lovely cards, cakes, flowers and, in one case, a beautiful hand-knitted fluffy jumper which I

Yours sincerely,

P. Mandelson, former Churchwarden (and hopefully European representative of the PCC!), Hinduja Mansions, Notting Hill Road.

The Editor reserves the right to cut all letters from the traitor Mr Mandelson for reasons which must be obvious to anyone except Mr Harris!

WOMEN'S GROUPS

Our thanks to Mrs Jay, who made time in her very busy and successful life to give a very interesting and useful talk on "Women and the Job Market".

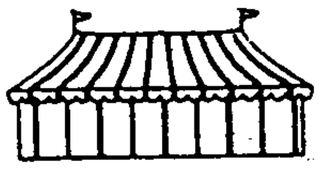
Mrs Jay began by saying that women were at a clear disadvantage because they were not men! But there were all sorts of ways a woman could get round this and find a job. One was to buy the local paper and look under the "Jobs Vacant" section. Another was to go to the local Job Centre and ask whether they had anything available. But the best way of all, Mrs Jay said, was to make sure you had the right father, the right husband and the right friends, ie the Vicar!

Mrs Jowell, in the chair, thanked Mrs Jay for her very helpful and entertaining address, and said that from now on there could certainly be no excuse for any woman to be out of a job!

Editor's Note

As we go to press, we learn the sad news that Mrs. Jay has decided to give up her job at the Old People's Home.

She tells us "I have enjoyed working for the Vicar very much. But I would like to have had a little more support from some of my male colleagues on the PCC. If I may say so, I think I did a good job. But now the time has come to spend more time telling my family what to do."



1 MILLENNIUM TENT

(not very much used)

Complete with pegs, guy ropes and almost life-size papier-mâché model of the Vicar.

We will pay *you* to take it away!!!

All offers considered, except from P-Y. Gerbil, especially from bona fide friends of the Vicar.

Would make perfect office block/ housing development/outdoor disco.

WORTH MILLIONS TO RIGHT OWNER

(*not* P-Y. Gerbil)

Genuine offers only, no time-wasters

(That's you, M. Gerbil!)

Purchaser collects, bring own lorry.

Apply Mr Falconer, C/o The Vicarage.

Stranger Danger!

Watch out for this man seen loitering around the village scrounging food and interviews. DO NOT APPROACH HIM!

Issued by P.C. Straw

Fundraising Cheese and Wine Party

Mr. Lairg cordially invites all lawyers to a special "Support the Vicar" Cheese and Wine Party to be held in his office on February 28th (Cash Wednesday). Bring a bottle and at least £200. Says Mr. Lairg "This is a real chance to help the Vicar – and the Vicar always remembers his friends in all kinds of ways. As it says in the Good Book *'A nudge for a nudge, and a wink for a wink.'*"

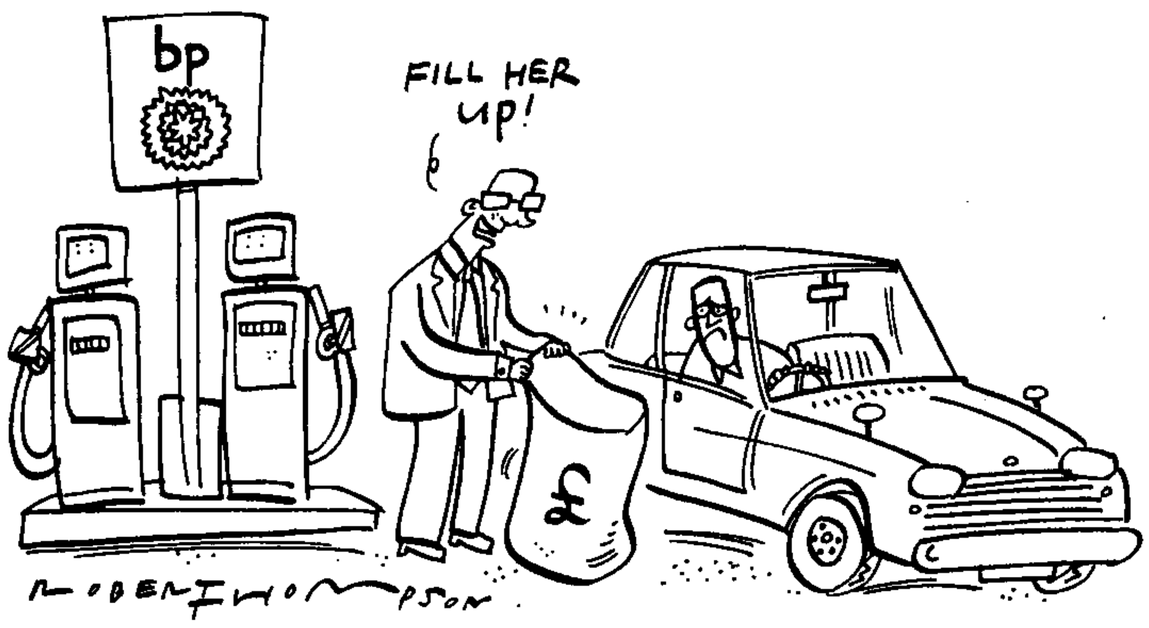
THE BOOK OF SHARON

1. And it came to pass, in the days of the intifada, that the children of Israel grew weary of the process called peace.
2. And they said amongst themselves, who is this man Bar-ak, son of E-hud, whom we have appointed to rule over us?
3. For he hath promised us a land flowing with milk and money, where the children of Israel would live in peace with the Arab-ites and the Araf-ites, even as the cocatrice lieth down with the porcupine.
4. But, lo, he delivereth it not.
5. For, verily, they said, the Arab-ites and the Araf-ites rise up in the streets of Gaza and in the hills of Hebron, and cast their stones upon us, crying "Go home, o ye children of Israel, even to A-mer-ica and R-ussia from whence ye came."
6. And the children of Is-rael waxed exceeding wroth at the thought of the Ara-bites getting away with it.
7. And there was dwelling in the land, an elder of the people whose name was Shar-on, which is to say the terminator.
8. And Shar-on was old and his skin was shrivelled, even as the walnut in the grove of Gil-ead that hath been dried in the heat of the noon-day sun.
9. And the children of Israel came unto Shar-on privily, and saith unto him "This Bar-ak is no bloody good."
10. And Shar-on saith unto them, "Thou hast spoken truly. For he preacheth peace and the result is war."
11. "I, on the other hand," saith Shar-on, son of Likud, "am a man who preacheth war which will bring you peace."
12. "For I say unto you that the only good Araf-ite is an dead Araf-ite."
13. And the children of Israel rose up and with one voice they called him "Cabba", which is to say, one who driveth an cab and speaketh the truth through a glass partition darkly.
14. And they said, "Let Shar-on rule over us." And so it came to pass, and Bar-ak was cast out, even into outer darkness (until he was asked back to join the Cabinet).
15. And the children of Israel rejoiced mightily. And they sang and danced and blew tributes to Sharon, even on the horns of their chariots.
16. And they said unto themselves: "Now, truly, we shall have peace. For the Araf-ites and the Hamas-ites will be too terrified of Shar-on to cause any more trouble."
17. But things did not come to pass in this wise.
18. For everything turneth into the shape of an pear, even the pear that groweth on the avocado tree that groweth in ther groves of Car-mel (buy one, get one free).
19. For the Araf-ites and the Hezboll-ites had learned a thing or two about smiting from the Children of Israel and had decided that this time they would get their smiting in first.
20. And so they did, even an hundredfold.
21. And there was much wailing and gnashing of teeth amongst the Children of Israel, who said unto one another: "This wasn't the idea at all. For it is meant to be the other way round."
22. And Shar-on said: "It will be. Just you wait."
23. And so it continueth, even unto the Day of Judgement.

(To be continued)

HEATH'S PRIVATE VIEW

THE OFFENSIVE RAPPER
I REALLY LIKE MY MOTHER AND FATHER, WE GET ON REALLY WELL...
I'M THINKING OF GETTING MARRIED, WE REALLY SEEM TO HIT IT OFF, MY GIRLFRIEND AND I....
AND IF I STAY AT MY PRESENT JOB I COULD GET A MORTGAGE. IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE CHILDREN...
HELLO!
HEATH



PATIENT LEAVES HOSPITAL ALIVE

by **Dr James Leftonatrolley**

THERE was wide-spread shock today at the news that a patient had left a hospital today without having been killed by a medical error.

A spokesman for the hospital said, "This is a very rare occurrence and there is no cause for alarm. We will be launching a full enquiry at once into what went right. We can only apologise to the undertakers."

EU CRITICAL OF ECONOMIES

by Our Europe Correspondent
Keith Vaz-upppp!

THE EU today formally censured the economies of Britain and Ireland, saying both had shown totally unacceptable levels of growth and prosperity.

"These two countries simply do not seem to understand that if they're ever to be considered truly a part of the European project," a Brussels spokesman complained, "then they must begin soon showing the same levels of high unemployment, low growth that the rest of Europe enjoys, along with a wholesale reliance on fiddling EU subsidy payments to prop up their ailing industries."

Despite this, the British and Irish governments insisted they would still prove themselves good Europeans by completely ignoring everything the EU says and carrying on doing exactly what they feel like.

GNOMEBYS

A Highly Important Sale of the Memorabilia of the Late Commander James Bond R.N. (HM Secret Service)

Items

Lot 1
Black D13-6 plastic water pistol, shown to Bond by 'Q' in *Thunderbox* (1965). Still in full working condition.
Guide price: £225,000.

Lot 2
Stuffed white cat, the property of Bond's No.1 enemy Sir James Goldpaste, head of the sinister REFERENDUM organisation which planned to take Britain out of the EU in the film *Fishfinger* (1996) and again in *Dr No To Europe* (1997). One eye missing.
Guide price: £510,000.

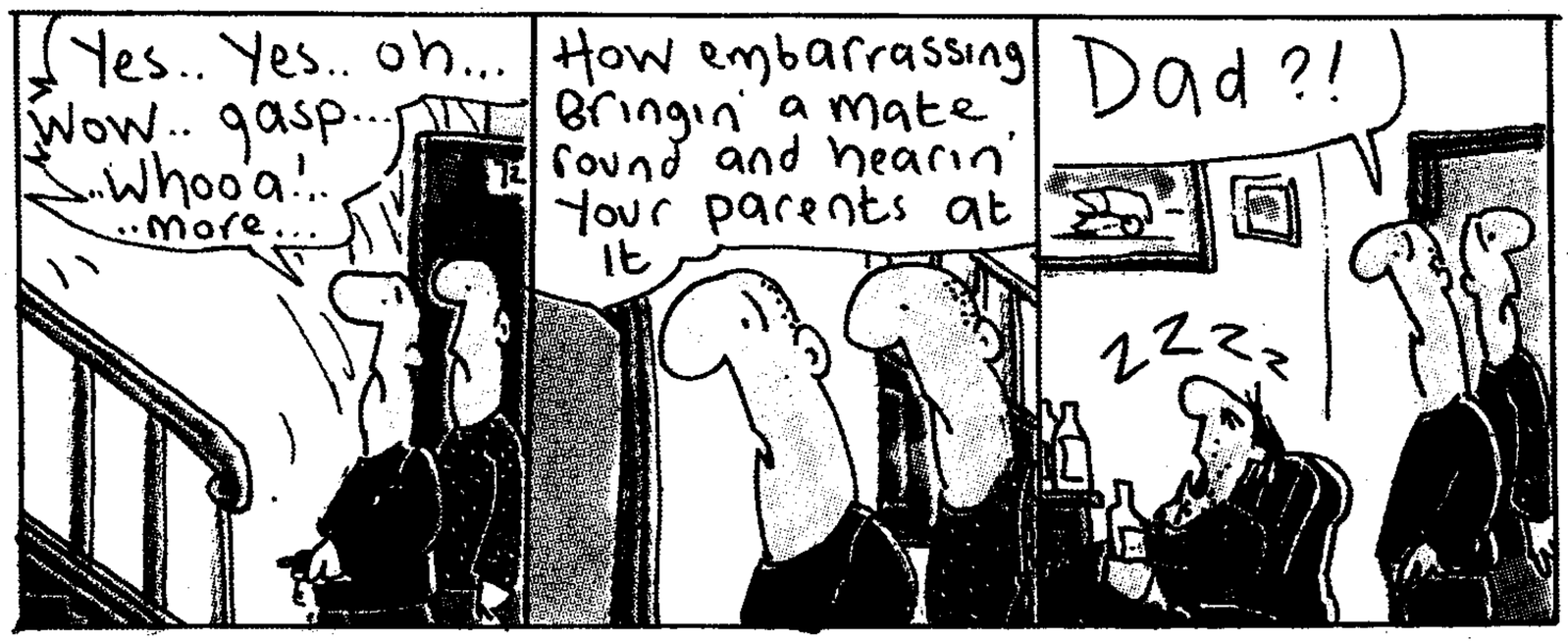
Lot 3
Plastic shower cap, as worn by Titzi Lamour (played by the young Vanessa Redgrave) in *For Your Pussy Only* (1971). Some staining.
Guide price: £750,000.

Lot 4
NASA space station, complete with rocket launch pad and numerous men in shirtsleeves working at whirring computers with flashing lights. As seen in all Bond films made between 1964 and 2000.
Guide price: £300 million.

Conch shell, of the type held by actress Ursula Undress in the famous beach scene from* Dr No Clothes On *(1962).
Guide price: £2 billion.

GNOMEBYS
LONDON NEW YORK PARIS

HUSBAND



Daily Mail Comment

WHY THOSE DISGUSTING INTERNET PICTURES SHOULD NEVER BE SHOWN

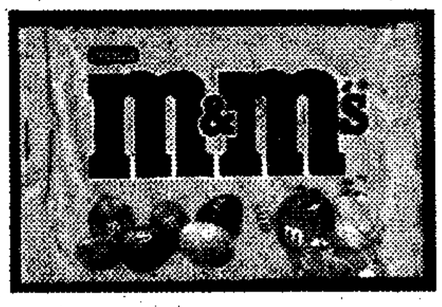
On other pages
Those disgusting pictures in full pages 2 - 94

Who Are They?

Your cut-out-'n'-throw-away guide to those EMINEMS

■ **EMINEM**, foul-mouthed performance artist and icon of Rap pick 'n' mix scene. Shocked middle England with his "chainsaw poof massacre" album. Hailed by the Times as "the greatest song-writer since Schubert".

■ **TRACY EMINEM**, foul-mouthed performance artist and icon of Britpopart. Shocked middle England with her "FILTHY KNICKERS" album. Hailed by the Independent as "a greater genius than Leonardo DiCaprio".



■ **M 'n' M**, foul-mouthed performance chocolates and icon of the hip-choc scene. Shocked middle England with their psychedelic colour-scheme and disgusting aftertaste. Hailed by the Guardian as "the Mahler of cheap confectionery".

■ **IDI EMIN**, foul-mouthed performance dictator and icon of the Afro-geno-cide scene. Shocked middle England with his attempt to kill everyone in Uganda. Hailed by the Telegraph as "a Sandhurst-trained high-flyer who could get the trains to run on time, if there were any".

■ **KEN 'N' EM**, sweetly-spoken performance couple and icons of the theatre-loving first night set. Shocked middle England with their divorce. Hailed by the Daily Mail as "a terrific way to fill up the pages until Liz Hurley is invented".

■ **M 'N' S** (That's enough, Ed.)

"What do you mean, you could only get couch potatoes?"

ARE WE TOO FAT?

Asks ***Lunchtime O'Bese***

THE editors of the nation's newspapers are today asking themselves "Are we too fat? Have we stuffed too many boring health surveys into our papers?"

The answer, worryingly, is yes. In 1986, the average paper was much thinner, sometimes a mere 36 pages. But today it is quite common to see a newspaper of 168 pages.

Phil Face

One newspaper that did not want to be named (The Sunday Times) told researchers "We're disgusting. We should be ashamed of ourselves. We fill ourselves up with junk articles and stuff we know is rubbish. It does us no good at all."

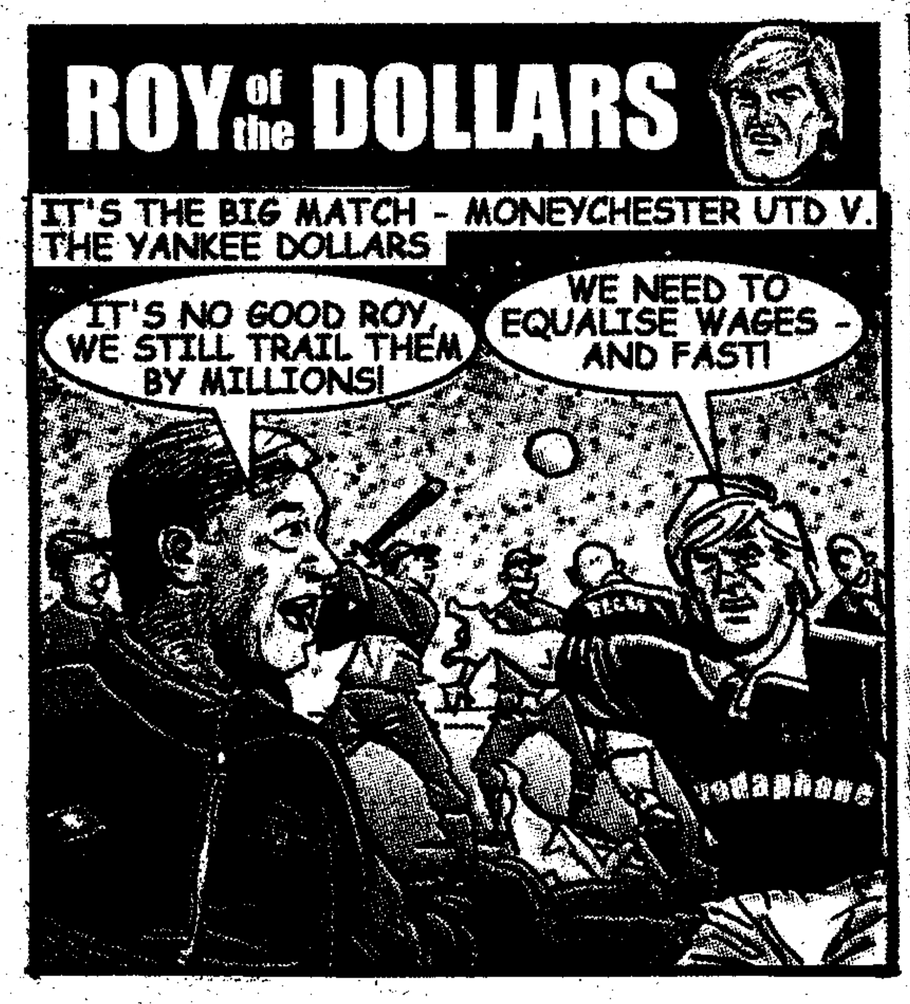
Vanessa Feltz is 38 stone.

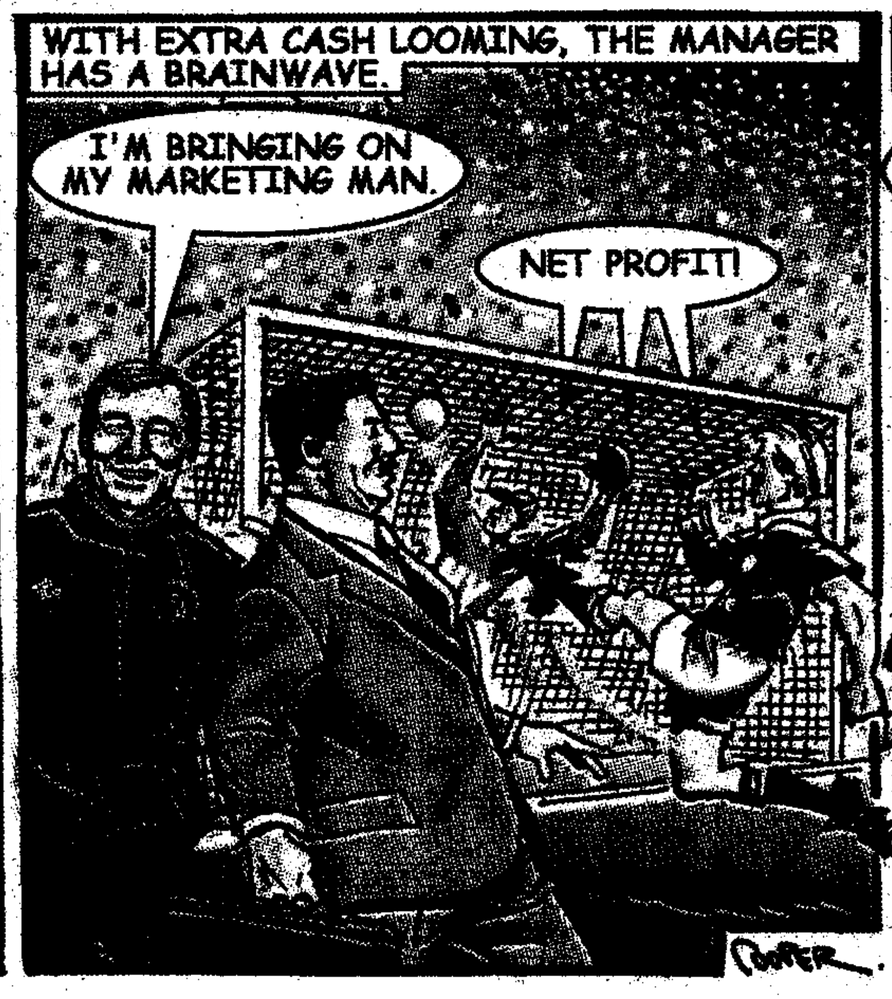
supercherie / syperʃəri / *nom féminin*
(tromperie) **deception; user de supercherie to use deception;** (acte) **hoax, act of deception;** (faux) **fake; monter une supercherie to set up a hoax; supercherie littéraire literary hoax.**

Oxford Superlex French-English Dictionary

CAPTION: Blahggg blah blah blah blgggah blah blah blah blah gggblah blah blahggg blah blah blah blah gggblah blah

Lincolnshire Echo auto supplement


ROY of the DOLLARS
IT'S THE BIG MATCH - MONEYCHESTER UTD V. THE YANKEE DOLLARS
IT'S NO GOOD ROY, WE STILL TRAIL THEM BY MILLIONS!
WE NEED TO EQUALISE WAGES - AND FAST!



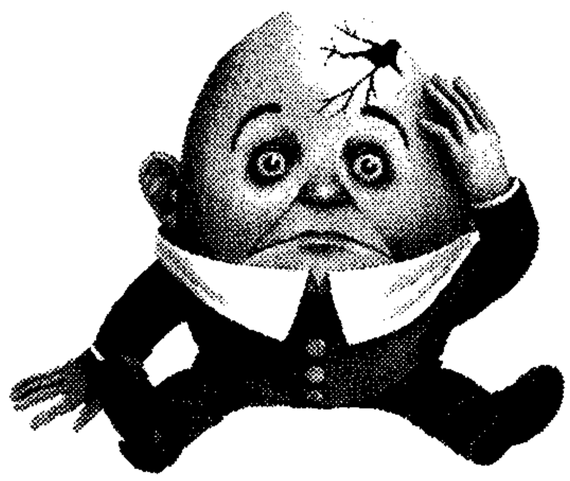
UTD GAIN PRECIOUS SHARE PRICE POINTS IN THE DYING SECONDS.
YOU'RE GOING HOME IN A FERRARI TESTAROSSA!
GREAT BALL PARK FIGURE, SON.

"Mum, it's the Betty Ford Clinic for you"

The Nursery Times

DUMPSTER DRUNK SHOCK

by Struwwelpeter McKay



MR HUMPTY Dumpster, the celebrated egg, was charged yesterday with being drunk in charge of a wall.

Mr Dumpster, 56, was found by the authorities, slumped at the foot of the wall, having crashed himself whilst under the influence of alcohol.

Said one of those attending the scene of the accident, "We found Dumpster lying there claiming that he had not drunk any of the ten green bottles surrounding him."

Fairy Tale

Mr Dumpster refused to give a yolk sample claiming that he was "allergic to spoons".

Said a furious Humpty, "My lawyer will prove conclusively that I was in complete control of the wall at all times and that the ten green bottles accidentally fell off it. Hic."

However, a representative of all the King's men who found Humpty Dumpster said, "He is cracked. He is clearly falling apart and nobody will be able to put him back together again."

ON OTHER PAGES

- **Owl and Pussycat to divorce. Nursery Rhymes' golden couple blame "pressures of work" for split.**
- First female Jumblie sails into record books.
- **Who killed Cock Robin? Police still baffled.**
- Dr Foster struck off after puddle fiasco.
- **Has Baby Spoon married her dish or just eloped?**
- Delays expected on all choo-choos.

PCC COMPLAINT RULING

Numerous complaints have been received about the endless coverage concerning the Press Complaints Commission's tenth anniversary party.

We find these complaints, that the party was a pointless shindig filled with hacks and soap stars fawning over royalty, to be upheld. We further find the idea of celebrating the existence of such a toothless organisation that lets the press get away with writing complete drivel was certain to cause offence.

We therefore find the Press Complaints Commission guilty, so we'll give ourselves a slap on the wrist, and hope that we won't do it again, but we probably will.

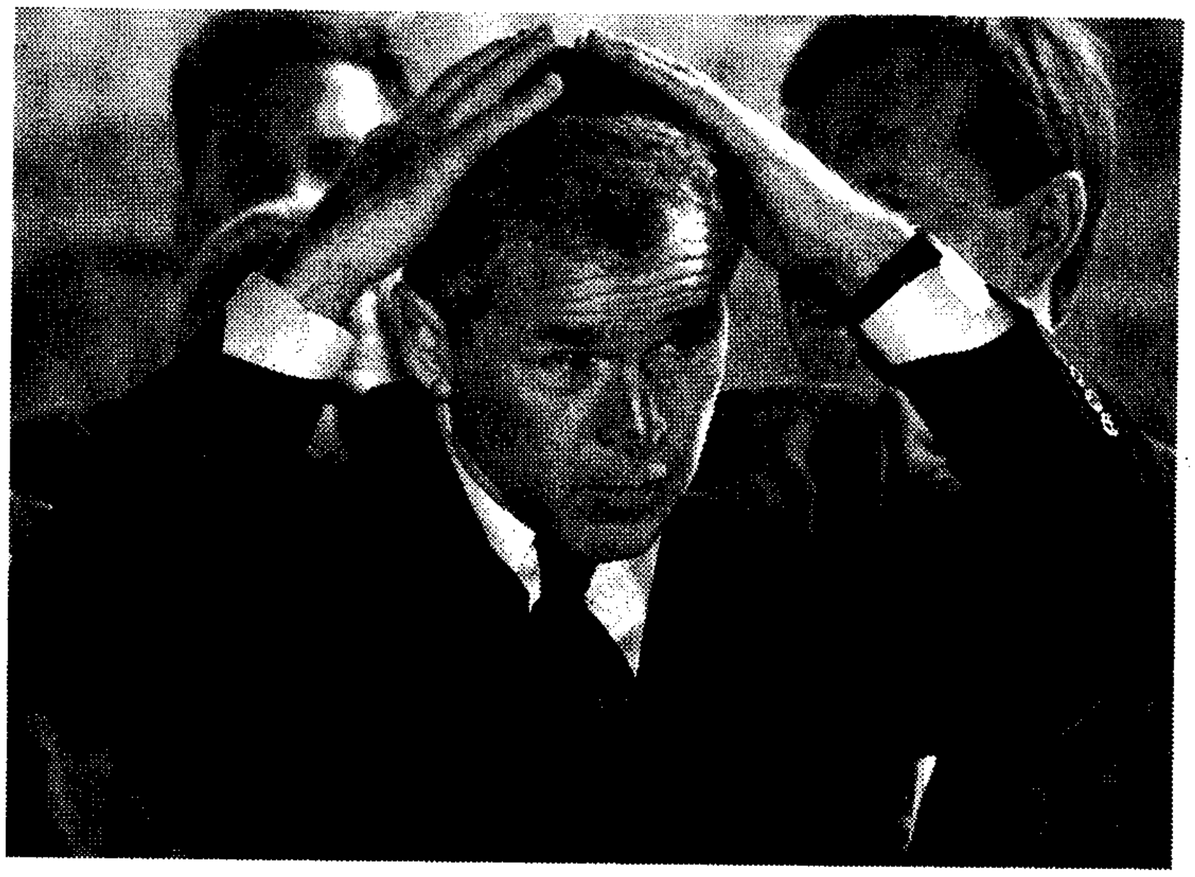
Film Choice

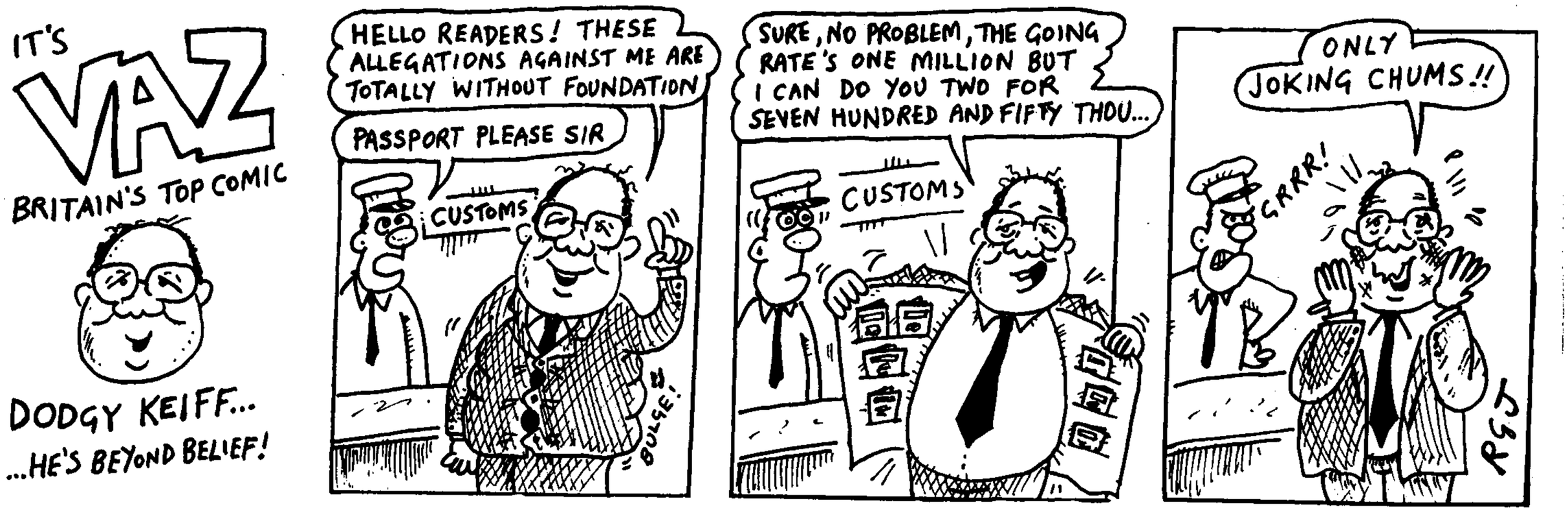
Horribal

He's back. Anthony Hopkins plays a hypocritical actor who says he'll never make a sequel, but then at the sight of a huge cheque EATS his words. A disgusting spectacle that will turn your stomach. Watch out for the amazing finale when Hopkins runs off with his money and yet again gets away with murder.

Eye rating: Bleurrgh!

TRIGGER-HAPPY LOONY CAUGHT ENTERING WHITE HOUSE





ME AND MY SPOON

THIS WEEK

SIR TREVOR McDONALD

In your very busy life as a broadcaster, do you have much time for spoons?

Very much so. You'd be surprised how many spoons I have on my desk at any one time!

What drew you to spoons in the first place?

When I was a boy in Trinidad, spoons were very much part of our daily life. We took spoons for granted.

What do you look for first in a spoon, would you say?

It very much depends on its function, doesn't it? I mean, you wouldn't use a teaspoon for serving spaghetti, would you?

Where do you stand on the big "plastic v. metal" debate?

I think there are good points to be made on both sides. But at News At Ten, I'm afraid, plastic's rather won the day!

Are there any spoons that you particularly dislike?

Yes, very definitely. I can't abide those little flat wooden spoons you get with the ice creams in the theatre! Horrid!

With your well-known love of poetry, you must have some favourites featuring spoons?

I'm very keen on Eliot's famous line describing how life is measured out in coffee spoons. I think that would have to be my favourite.

Has anything amusing ever happened to you in connection with a spoon?

No.

NEXT WEEK: Eminem.

Letters to the

Women On The Front Line

SIR – As one with his fair share of experience of combat, I can testify that the presence of women on the battlefield is entirely inappropriate.

The loss of morale that would be occasioned by the death or injury of a female comrade-in-arms would inevitably lead to desertion on a huge scale – as indeed happened at the Battle of Monopylae (391 BC) when the invading Phoenicians were put to flight following the death of Princess Greia of Germania who had disguised herself as a man, if the historian Strepsilides is to be believed.

Brigadier P.J.D. Farqharson-Trubshaw, The Old Brothel, Sherborne, Dorset.

SIR – I fail to understand what all the fuss is about. If women can sail single-handedly round the globe, become prime minister of Britain and win the Women's Singles at Wimbledon, why on earth should they not be given the right to take their place alongside their male comrades in the war cemeteries of the world?

Col. J.A. Frobisher (Mrs), The Old Battleaxe, Battle, Sussex.

SIR – In the 1939-45 war, as we read in Count Nikolai Tolstoy's epic work *Believe It Or Not*, entire divisions of the Red Army were made up of women, including all the tank crews who fought in the terrible battle of Michaelgrad. These women lived for months at a time on a diet of nothing but diesel oil and frozen bootleather, but succeeded in defeating a German army of more than a million crack SS troops under the command of Field Marshal "Hitler" Hastings.

Sir John Trumper-Smythe (Defence Editor, Daily Telegraph 1875-1938), The Old Bunker, St. Alingrad, Wilts.

SIR – Why should women want to fight in men's wars anyway? Why not let men kill each other, as they have done since time began, instead of offering ourselves as targets for their patriarchal, phallo-centric killing fields?

Not yours (or any other man's), **Deirdre Spart**, Department of Non-Military History and Post-Feminist Studies, University of Womanchester (formerly Cheadle Hulme Polytechnic).

SIR – It is all very well to want to put women in the front line, but where are they going to pin medals on them?

Mike Giggler, via e-mail.

We Write – You Kip

SIR – In his article 'Whither UKIP' (March 7th), Dr Alan Skamm claims that the MEP for South Avon, Mr Nigel Farrago, once had lunch at L'Etoile with the late Sir Oswald Mosely. This canard, originally published in the UKIP Newsletter Sept. 9th 1999 under the headline "Why We Must Think Again", was shown to be a complete fabrication of renegade anti-UKIP MEPs intent on undermining the *(cont. p. 94)*

Dr C.J.P. Barkwroth, DunBorisin, North Richard, Somerset.

How Fashion Works

I am tired of reading in the pets column "Kittens for sale to good homes". If the advertisers' cats had a good home they would be neutered.

Genuine neutered cat lover and owner, Dudley.

Letter to Wolverhampton Express & Star

SLEEPING Bag, Peak, 6.15, ideal for Duke of Edinburgh, unwanted gift; £20.

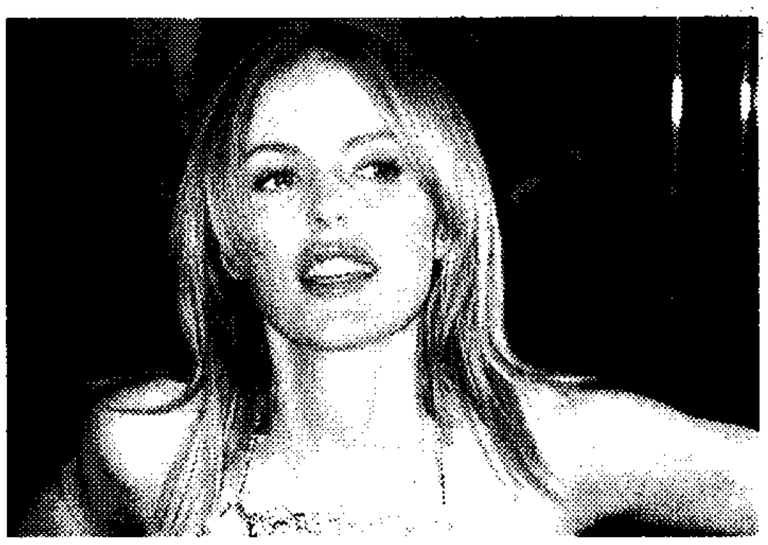
The West Briton

YOUNG BRITISH ARTISTS

BY BIRCH

According to this survey, people still prefer Old Masters to contemporary cutting-edge art!
ART NEWSPAPER MOST VISITED SHOWS SHOCK!
Thank God for that! Imagine the shame of being liked!
Accessible!
Urgh!
NEWSPAPER T VISITED SHOCK!

DIARY



PATSY KENSIT

I guess it all stems from childhood. I've never been able to do that thing where you look at a guy and you think, like, "You're cute, let's just have some fun together." Even if one side of me is like thinking, "How fucking cute is he!" another side of me is like thinking, no, I'm not the kind of woman who just fools around. My mother used to say you should never get married to someone before having sex with them, and basically I agree with her, it's the whole religious thing in me. For instance, there's been a lot of shit written about me and rock stars, like I've had sex or whatever with all these rock stars. But there's only been Liam, and like he was my husband. And Jim Kerr, and he was my husband. So when people say I've like slept around I think, like, "Know what? Fuck off!" There was only Nick Heyward of Haircut 100 – and people forget they were top of the charts then, so don't tell me that's not allowed. And the bass player of Spandau, whasisname. Number one. And the drummer in Sweet. Ditto. Well, maybe they were more like number 7. Same difference. Could have reached number 1 if we'd waited a week, but we didn't, did we, and that was lucky 'cos actually they went down to number 23 and then out of the charts like altogether. And the guy who played tambourine with Kajagoogoo. I snogged him something rotten. Least, he *said* he played tambourine with Kajagoogoo. And Andy Ridgeley of Wham. And Cliff. And Robbie Robinson of Call My Bluff. That guy totally freaked me out. Brainy or what? Like, what is it with him and words?

I suppose it all stems from childhood. When Liam finally pissed off, I'm like "Good fucking riddance!" I should of guessed earlier, I s'pose. Like on our wedding day, packed church, right, and we're going up the aisle, when Liam like suddenly tuns left and starts snogging one of the Nolan Sisters, and they haven't had a hit for like *centuries*.

And on the wedding night, we're like checked into the VIP Suite at the Halcyon Hotel, that's a suite that's like for Very Imptelligent Persons or whatever, and we're about to go totally crazy and we've taken some of the old hokey-cokey and we're all set to do all sorts of really filthy things to each other, right, when I hear a cough from the bedroom cupboard and when I open it there's like three girls from All Saints and even a couple from Steps standing there starkers and I'm like, "Liam! I don't *need* this shit!" And Liam freaks out, he's like, "Honest, I never knew they was fookin' there! Get me the fookin' manager and I'll fookin' complain!" And I thought that was dead cool, so I believed him.

So like I'm like desperate to save the marriage, but Liam's going really wild, wrecking the new house, throwing everything out of the window and that, and it's driving me nuts. The TV. The video. The remote. All the furniture. The bed. Kitchen fittings. Bean bags. Picassos. Toilet paper. Carpets. The lot. Then there's nothing left to throw, so he like rings Harrods and orders a whole lot more, and when he gets fed up with it, he lies back and pays the Harrods delivery men to like throw the rest out the window for him. I'm like, I don't need this whole thing. So to regain my self-esteem, I took off my top for FHM magazine, really beautiful, dignified session, sort of Shakespearean really. And by posing naked, I felt empowered once more.

Liam could be a real shite or a total arsehole, depending on his mood. He'd come into the dining-room and piss in the solid gold vase in the centre of the Louis Carthorse table and I'd be like, "He's in his real shite mood today". But then he'd throw the vase out the window and I'd realise he was into the whole total arsehole thing. But sometimes Liam could be ever so thoughtful. He once gave me this lovely, lovely range of really pricey china, Nissen or Missen or whatever, and I'm like, "Oh, Liam, you shouldn't of!" so he's like "Why d'you fookin' say I shouldn't of? Who you starin' at?" and he throws it out the window, but like it's the thought that counts. I guess it all stems from childhood.

Once when I told Liam I really fancied George Clooney – I mean, I was really like, "How fucking fanciable is he or what?!!!", Liam went totally like mad and started throwing the whole house out the window, bricks, ceilings, the lot – he got Harrods to deliver a bulldozer and crane for it, nothing but the best. It might've worked but we were on the top floor, and the house went into this like whole crumbling to pieces thing. So then we move to this like stately home in the country, but it turns out All Saints and B'Witched and Gerri Halliwell and The Corrs all have stately homes in the same village, so Liam's never home and I start like losing my self-esteem. So I pose for like nude shots in a deserted warehouse for GQ magazine, and by showing my tits I feel very in control, I'm like "I'm in control", I'm not vulnerable and when I see myself on that GQ cover with my top off I don't feel like quite so naked any more.

I guess it all stems from childhood. My mum always used to say there's no point getting divorced if you're not married, and I agree. I suppose it's the whole religious thing in me. So when Liam started having it off with the lead singer of the Roly-Polys, claiming he was just having a bit of trouble with the bean-bag I'm like, you might fucking fuck me up, but I'm fucked if you're gonna fuck me over kind of thing, right? And when it all ended, I wanted my dignity back. Sorry, but I never wanted to be seen as like just this rock chick with great tits, so I set out to regain my self-esteem by checking into this brilliant clinic for like the best breast enhancement in the business and then agreeing to show them off in a really tasteful like way for Arena magazine. Now I'm totally in control. Rock stars? Never again – not after Liam, thanx for nothing! Now I'm just having quiet dates with really nice, well-mannered guys. Like last week I went out to dinner with Eminem, who's a really sweet, gentle bloke when you get to know him, he only gets mad when something's really pissed him off. He's just a friend, a good friend, nothing more.

But I've gotta admit it, I mean, how fucking beautiful is he!!!! D'you know if he's like married yet?

As told to
CRAIG BROWN

SO I COME OUT OF THIS RESTAURANT IN A VERY GOOD MOOD AND THEN SEE THE BLOODY LIMO'S PARKED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD...
YOU'RE KIDDING!!
I HAD TO AVOID SEVERAL LANES OF HEAVY TRAFFIC TO GET TO IT AND THE CHAUFFEUR JUST SAT THERE WATCHING ME!!
SH*T!
WHEN I POINTED OUT TO HIM, IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS, HE WASN'T PAID TO PARK ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE ROAD, I COULDN'T BELIEVE HIS ATTITUDE.
WHAT DID HE SAY?
"THIS ISN'T YOUR LIMO. I'M WAITING FOR THE RITCHIES."
CRINGE. YOU'VE GOT TO GET PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES, GARY.

Literary Review

By jingo!

The Cash Nexus: Money and Power in the Modern World

Niall Ferguson

(Allen Lane, £20)

LIKE policemen and doctors, Oxford professors seem to getting younger by the day. This one, the holder of a chair in something called "Political and Financial History', which I don't believe they had in my day, is a mere 36. They are also getting trendier (Prof Ferguson is the darling of the right-wing broadsheets) and are now startlingly well-paid. According to an admiring pre-publication profile, our man was shunted a cool £600,000 for this thrumming cross-disciplinary (politics *and* economics) opus.

Historical fashions change at lightning speed, of course. Not that long ago, the trend was for minutely detailed investigations of fairly restricted locales (remember *Lucky Jim's* Jim Dixon and his article on "The Economic Influence of the Developments in Shipbuilding Techniques, 1450-1485"?) Then, without warning, the needle swung towards magisterial grand sweeps and panoplies (what about Keith Thomas's *Religion and the Decline of Magic* and *Man and the Natural World* for a couple of show-stoppingly epic titles?) Then, suddenly, it was all microcosmic reconstructions, as pioneered by Emmanuel Ladurie's early 80s mega-seller *Montaillou*, a portrait of a medieval French village.

Recently, however, fuelled by the efforts of messrs Fukayama and Schama, the big publishing advances have been showered on people who combine the broad sweep with lashings of forensic detail. Sound schemes *and* evidence. All of which brings us to *The Cash Nexus*, a 550-page leviathan of a book which, once synopsised, could equally well make a brisk little article for the *Spectator*.

Prof Ferguson's take on three centuries of political economy starts out by posing the age-old question: does money make the world go round? The answer – and this with 540 or so pages still to go – is no; but thankfully this isn't really what the book is about. Leaving aside a hidden agenda of quite gargantuan dimensions for a moment, Ferguson begins by setting up two aunt sallies: Old Economic Determinism and New Economic Determinism. The former means Marx and his dim modern apologists (Eric Hobsbawn gets a conspicuous roughing up). The latter is represented by Yanks such as Bradford deLong, whose theme is "the story of liberty and prosperity" and to whom all discontents and ideologies are at heart economic.

To buttress his notion that historical change really springs from a chaos of politics, sociology and the stirrings of countless individual human hearts, Fergy than rolls out three "typical hypotheses" which he intends to explode: first, that economic growth promotes democracy; second, that economic success secures reelection for the governments that preside over it; third, that economic growth is the key to international power. It is at this point, alas, that the first rustle of paper tigers crawling stealthily through the undergrowth breaks upon the jungle air. Never mind that two minutes' thought would dispose of all three, Professor F. still whips out his shotgun and, laboriously, with frequent breaks for fresh ammunition and inspection of the corpses, blows them into fragments.

At which point the hidden agenda becomes a touch less hidden. Having demonstrated to his satisfaction that it isn't the economy, stupid, Ferguson is free, beneath a glorious banner of pragmatism and empirical evidence, to usher all manner of brazen articles of neo-Conservative faith in through the side-gate. The British welfare state began to crack up when post-war governments broke the link between contributions and entitlements. Growth and democracy have prospered in former British colonies – much better than in French and German enclaves – because of a proud imperial heritage, based on the rule of law, "to be precise, the kind of law that attaches paramount importance to individual property rights".

All fine jingoistic stuff, no doubt, but unconscionably mild when set against the drum-beat of the final chapter. The problem about US economic imperialism, bless us, is not that it's economic imperialism but that it isn't backed up with hard political action. Apparently, America "should be devoting a larger percentage of its vast resources to making the world safe for capitalism and democracy."

Making the world safe for *what*? I wouldn't dream of asking an Oxford historian to define his terms, but to make the fundamental mistake of assuming that America (and Britain, if it comes to that) are democracies rather than finely tuned and ingeniously fashioned oligarchies calls a great deal of the preceding material into question. Never mind, I'm sure the *Economist* – which also believes all this guff – will simply love it. And – a minor point, perhaps – I was vastly amused by the reference to *Beyond the Fringe*, which was apparently presented by someone called "Peter Cooke".

Books & Bookmen

■ SO farewell, then, to the choleric David "Mekon" Kneale, unceremoniously sacked as md of Waterstone's, along with his operations director Brian Worrall.

While the Mekon's exit comes as no great surprise, the fact that his patron, HMV Media chief executive officer Alan "Weasel" Giles, has survived unscathed does. How much longer before the main shareholders – EMI Group and US venture capitalist Advent – demand Giles' head?

Meanwhile, the net result of the Kneale regime is that the company is now valued at between £140m and £200m, compared to around £300m a year ago. The new value is, as it happens, the sort of money that turbulent Tim Waterstone – still nominally HMV Media's chairman – could pull together to buy the firm back. We shall see...

■ W.H. SMUG's literary award was always, somewhat oddly for one sponsored by a populist chain, the most elitist of all, decided by a small panel of critics who never stooped to requiring submissions from publishers.

This year Smug has introduced new awards, open to voting from members of the public. But some of those taking part in the poll will not be the ordinary readers Smug had in mind. A message on Penguin's intranet exhorts staff: "The opportunity to vote... is a bit of fun not to be missed... With such a strong presence for Penguin, make sure you click into the W H Smith site for your chance to vote."

How vulgar – and how unlike the incorruptible world of the old W.H. Smug award, which continues with a judging panel including Lucy Hughes-Hallett, wife of Cape publisher Dan Franklin. Of the five titles on this panel's longlist, only three are from Cape.

■ IT SEEMS the sequence of Frederick Forsyth short stories issued by electronic publisher Online Originals has failed to set the world alight saleswise – or legitimise the much-vaunted e-book, as planned.

Love or loathe the old dinosaur, Freddie's still a very bankable author, and the venture didn't go short of publicity when it was announced on the eve of Frankfurt. So what went wrong?

Potential purchasers found that to negotiate the labyrinthine payment process needed the combined skills of a software engineer and a locksmith. So, while plenty of browsers visited the site and tried to buy the stories, most gave up after hours of repeatedly entering credit card details to no avail.

Now Online Originals md Phil Rance has taken redundancy and the company is being run as a skeleton operation by its major shareholder, the consultancy firm Credo, pending a further cash injection. Meanwhile, Forsyth fans will have to wait until Transworld publishes, er, a paper edition of the stories some time in the next year or two.

■ A CURIOUS piece appeared in the *Bookseller* recently concerning the decision of "Any Old" Ion Trewin to step down as md of Weidenfeld & Nicolson to devote himself to commissioning and editing great works.

One anonymous "publishing insider" suggested that "people don't seem to like working for [Trewin], and have said that he is impossible".

While he has a reputation for sometimes being a bad listener, many in the Orion building found "impossible" rather strong. Whatever Trewin's failings, he is not someone whom the truly impossible Anthony "Fatty" Cheetham can easily afford to lose – for he is just about the only person who can make sense of the crabbed handwriting in Alan Clark's unpublished diaries, which represent potential lucre for Orion for some years to come.

'Bookworm'

SNIPCOCK & TWEED
MICHAEL CRICHTON PRESENTS A TERRIFYING VISION OF THE FUTURE
'JURASSIC PARK' MAN BOOK DEAL
£28 MILLION FOR AN AUTHOR - HELP!!
JURASSIC PARK MAN BOOK DEAL

Remainders of the Day

ANTHEA Turner's autobiography *Fools Rush In* is now on sale in the Camden branch of discount bookstore, The Works, for the heart-breaking sum of £2.

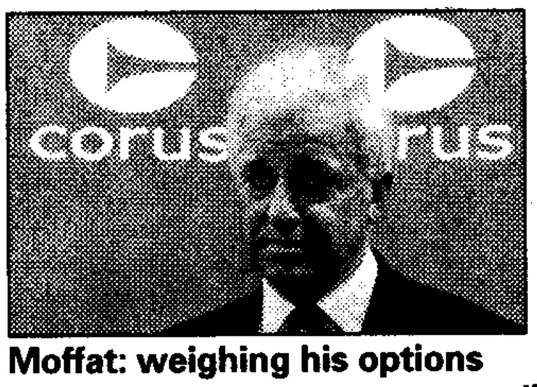
Meanwhile in the Cheltenham branch, *The Official Guide to the Dome*, with a foreword by the Rev Blair and reduced from £19.99 to 99p, has just sold out.

IN THE BACK

HALLELUJAH CORUS!

THE decision by the board of Corus, formerly British Steel, to "lose" at least 4,000 steel jobs, is not the board's only achievement in recent months. These include:

Raiding the pension fund. The steelworkers' union ISTC, in its evidence to the Commons trade and industry committee, last November accused the company of swiping £863m from the British Steel Pension Fund and using the money to reduce the employers' contribution to the fund. As Llew Smith, the Labour MP for Blaenau Gwent and the Ebbw Vale steelworks, pointed out in the Commons on 10 January: "Most of the money invested in the pension fund was paid in by the publicly-owned British Steel Corporation... in effect, the money expropriated by Corus and its predecessors was British taxpayers' money".



Moffat: weighing his options

Lobbing millions to shareholders. The first act of Corus after it was set up last year was to hand out £694m to shareholders.

Paying handouts to failed directors. When joint chief executives John Bryant and Fokko van Duyne were forced to resign from the company in December because of their abject failure to deal with the crisis in the industry, they were rewarded with pay-offs of £1m each.

Sustaining the Corus chairman, Sir Brian Moffat, in the lifestyle to which he has become accustomed. Moffat used to be a humble accountant for the publicly-owned British Steel until it was privatised and he became chief executive and then chairman, netting an OBE from Thatcher in 1982 and a knighthood from Major in 1996. His salary now is £520,362 and he has 625,265 share options. Since sacking both his chief executives he has taken over their jobs. The *Eye* asked Corus if Sir Brian's remuneration had been increased as a result of his new responsibilities. A spokesman said he did not know because the remuneration committee had not met since Sir Brian assumed them!

NB: On St Valentine's morning there was great news for all steelworkers about to be sacked. The office of Sir Ken Jackson, the engineering and electrical workers' union leader, issued a message of hope to the effect that redundant workers in steel could look forward to new jobs for EXI, a subsidiary of Ericsson specialising in the erection of television masts.

The enthusiasm for what seems an unlikely salvation waned as the day went on and former steelworkers in Rotherham remembered similarly optimistic assurances from Sir Ken the last time mass redundancies were announced in the steel industry – about a year ago. The jobs never materialised.

NAREY, NAREY QUITE CONTRARY...

PRISON chief Martin Narey's petulant threat to resign because he is no longer prepared to keep apologising for his "hell-hole" jails has bemused staff at his London headquarters.

It seems he cannot remember writing a long article in the *Birmingham Post* only eight weeks ago in which he attacked a former high-flying colleague, David Wilson, who had quit the prison service in disgust, for making a "personal misjudgement".

At the end of a 600-word "apology" for the state of the country's prisons – "change for the better is underway", "drug abuse has fallen by about 60 percent", "prisons will soon see new healthcare centres and psychiatric nursing support from the NHS", etc, etc – Narey suggested that had Wilson stayed, he "would share my optimism that the service is on the right tracks".

So why is he now threatening to join Wilson outside the service, saying he can find an easier way to make a living and blaming staff for a "betrayal of the most base kind, of our duty to those in our care"? Insiders suggest the career civil servant is preparing for his departure. He has been heavily criticised over his handling of Blantyre House raid (*Eyes passim*), the chief inspector of prisons keeps bringing out critical reports of jails under his leadership and burgeoning inmate numbers in already overcrowded means jails are not going to get any better.

HOW BA WAS CAUGHT NAPS-ING

MORE on the desperate efforts of British Airways to get its hands on a billion-pound surplus in one pension fund so it can subsidise another loss-making pension fund it created itself.

On 16 February more than 100 BA pensioners descended on the high court to hear Mr Justice Lloyd give judgement. The case had been brought to clarify the meaning of clause 11 of one of the fund's trust deeds, which dealt among other things with the use of the surplus. This fund, known as APS, serves older pensioners at BA and had a surplus of £1.2bn. The New Airways Pension Scheme (NAPS), set up on privatisation in 1984, serves younger BA staff. Its deficit has grown in two years from £5m to £281m.

As reported in *Eye* 1017 BA proposed to merge the two schemes so the APS surplus could bail out the NAPS deficit. But a campaign against the merger was supported by an enormous majority of APS pensioners.

In May last year the active members of the scheme overwhelmingly passed a vote of no-confidence in their trustees for supporting the merger. None of the trustees had the decency to resign. Last October retired BA captain Mike Post stood for election as a trustee on a platform of opposition to the merger and won by a handsome majority. A few weeks later, the trustees reversed their support for the merger and opposed it. British Airways sulked, claiming there was still a case for the merger.

Over four days last month Mr Justice Lloyd was asked to interpret clause 11. Would the employer, British Airways, be allowed to pay itself a hunk of the pension scheme's surplus? To the consternation of BA's lawyers, the judge concluded that "current legislation would not allow such a payment in present circumstances".

Perhaps the most interesting and almost unreported part of the case was the statement of Mike Post about the persistent conflicts of interest in the BA pensions controversy. He pointed out the following:

1. In June 1999 the chairman of the trustees for both pension schemes was Derek Stevens – at the time chief financial officer of British Airways.

2) The secretary for both schemes is pensions manager for British Airways – Jenny Rosser MBE.

3) Immediately before the trustees' meetings to decide on the merger proposal, Derek Stevens and Jenny Rosser hatched a plan to use two company-appointed trustees to represent BA's interests at the meetings.

4) "Over two years ago when the massive billion-pound surplus in APS was first revealed, the scheme secretary authorised a consultation with counsel on behalf of the trustees to seek advice on the disposal of the surplus in APS and the unilateral use of that surplus by the employer. However, there is no record in any minutes that I can find that that consultation, its initiation or its outcome was ever reported to the trustees on whose behalf it had been held. The scheme secretary cannot recall whether she mentioned the consultation to the trustees either individually or as a board... In subsequent correspondence the scheme's secretary has told me that the unreported consultation was 'unremarkable' and that it is a matter for her judgement if such legal advice should be passed on.

5) "I have found evidence that a company-appointed trustee responsible for industrial relations, who had been representing British Airways at meetings with unions to discuss the use of the APS surplus had also sat on the trustees sub-committee formed to examine the merger proposal." This was David Lebrecht, who has since resigned as a trustee.

Mike Post: dismay

Mr Post added that he was "dismayed" to find that the trustees "were proposing to ask if clause 11 permitted them to use the APS surplus to make a payment to the employer". The pension scheme, he insisted, "is not a British Airways piggy bank" and "should be run for the benefit of the members. If there is a surplus in our pension scheme it should be applied to fulfilling the main objects of the scheme under the rules, not to subsidising the shareholders of British Airways".

When Mike Post sat down, leading counsel for the APS trustees, Elizabeth Gloster QC, who earns some £1.8m a year in fees, asked the judge if she could comment on what the captain had said. He told her no.

PS: The company secretary of BA who was then also a trustee and who chaired the trustees' sub-committee formed to investigate the pensions merger was Gail Redwood, wife of the former Tory secretary of state for Wales, John Redwood. She resigned as company secretary in March last year.

DAWES FOR THOUGHT

THE great good fortune of Paul Dawes, the fat fraudster convicted of a million-pound scam, continues apace.

He was up for sentence at Worcester crown court on 16 February, but his case was adjourned for a month after his counsel Michael Morse explained that Dawes was "not well" and has to undergo a "full body scan".

Judge Andrew Geddes agreed at once to postpone sentence for another month. Observers in court were astonished at the leniency shown to the fat fraudster, especially as he has led West Midlands police a merry dance since he disappeared in 1996 after taking at least £1m in cash for posh cars which were never delivered. He did a runner to Mozambique and bought a nightclub in Zimbabwe before finally returning to Britain and giving himself up to West Midlands police.

Fraudsters who imagine that the Dawes case opens up wonderful opportunities for dodging the authorities should know though that Paul Dawes was a hard-working informant for West Midlands police, and has helped secured a number of convictions for them – including that of Jogen Rajcoomar who was jailed for seven years for a drugs offence in which almost all his accomplices were officers in the West Midlands police, supposedly out to catch him.

As reported in *Eye* 959, Dawes ensnared Rajcoomar in the police drugs net after befriending him in prison. Rajcoomar pleaded guilty and his seven-year stretch must be compared with whatever is eventually handed down to the fat fraudster.

PC PLODDING

DAVID MULCAHY, jailed for life earlier this month as one of Britain's worst serial rapists and murderers, might have been stopped 13 years ago had vital forensic evidence not gone astray.

Hair, semen and other samples taken from Miss X, a rape victim of Mulcahy's in 1983, appear to have gone missing or been destroyed or overlooked by the time she picked Mulcahy out as her attacker at an identity parade in 1987.

Had these two vital pieces of the crime jigsaw been put together, it is possible Mulcahy would have gone to jail at the same time as his partner in rape and murder John Duffy, who was sentenced to life in 1988. Instead the woman's identity evidence had to stand alone. Then, for some unexplained reason, officers investigating the railway rapes as part of Operation Hart decided that there had been a breach of identity parade rules and that even her identification testimony could not be used. Mulcahy was released without charge.

Lawyers acting for the woman have now asked the police complaints authority to investigate the police failures. Mulcahy was pulled in for questioning on several occasions.

In her letter to the PCA Harriet Wistrich, Miss X's solicitor, says her client was not the only Mulcahy victim to have experienced "shoddy police work". According to reports, another victim who had recognised Mulcahy's photo-fit picture had attempted to come forward on four separate occasions before the police would take a statement from her. "If the failings had not occurred, Mr Mulcachy might well have been convicted in 1987, possibly preventing further rapes and murders," writes Ms Wistrich.

Miss X was subjected to a terrifying rape at knifepoint in the railway sidings of a London station in the summer of 1983 – when Mulcahy and Duffy were at their most active. She had to beg for her life. After the rape she had broken free and gone straight to the police. A doctor examined her and took samples and swabs.

Over the next four years she attended three identity parades. On the last she picked out Mulcahy. Unusually, at the time of his attack on Miss X Mulcahy was not wearing a balaclava. She got a good look at him. At the time she was a trained speech therapist and requested that all the men on parade say a few words to confirm her visual suspicion. After Mulcahy spoke she had no doubt he was her assailant.

In the event Miss X was told *she* had breached parade protocol and her evidence could not be used. This is curious because there is provision for witnesses to request that suspects speak; and if there had been a breach it would have been the responsibility of the officers.

It is also not known what happened to the conclusive forensic evidence collected after the attack on Miss X. As Ms Wistrich said: "Police had every opportunity to produce damning evidence to convict an assailant. That he was apprehended, identified but then released 13 years ago is a serious matter that robbed my client of a chance of justice."

MMR and autism: another report lands on the flaw

YET more headlines appeared in the press last week declaring that the controversial MMR vaccine was not linked to the dramatic rise in autism (see *Eyes passim*). They were triggered by another research paper, this time published on the *British Medical Journal*'s website. Once again, though, the claims are not borne out by careful scrutiny.

In this latest study US researchers compared the 1990s trend of increasing autism in the UK against the pattern of take-up of MMR, first introduced in the UK in October 1988. The study of 305 children aged 12 or under with autism diagnosed in the years 1988-99 found an alarming seven-fold increase in cases of the brain disorder. In a further detailed analysis of 114 boys aged two to five years born in 1988-93, it found a four-fold increase.

Although the hike coincided with the introduction of MMR, the researchers said the increase continued steadily throughout most of the 1990s. Because near-total MMR vaccination was consistent throughout the period and exposure was therefore steady, whatever the explanation for autism, it could not be MMR. If it had been, researchers concluded, numbers would have been expected to flatten off after the initial introduction boost.

However, as the authors admit, their methods were "second-best" and "relatively crude" because what they really wanted to do was compare vaccinated and unvaccinated children – but they could not find enough unvaccinated children. In fact it is a major criticism that there has never been a study of the long-term effects of immunisation using an unvaccinated control group – the usual tool of sound science.

The main criticisms of the paper are that while the data for immunisation is accurate, the NHS data for autism on which the study relies is anything but, rendering it worthless. At its crudest, if the growth rate depicted in the study continued, we would be facing a catastrophe akin to the sub-Saharan Aids pandemic.

Mark Berelowitz, consultant child psychiatrist and co-author of the first paper to raise questions about the MMR vaccine and regressive autism, puts it succinctly. Responding to the *BMJ* he says: "The authors claim to have evidence that the incidence has risen seven-fold in 10 years (from 0.3 to 2.1 cases per 10,000 person years). Projecting this forward, by the year 2040 the incidence will be 5,000 per 10,000 person years, and soon thereafter every child born will develop autism.

"Alternatively, this is a dramatic blip covering just a 10 year period only, and the increase will not continue. In that case the blip can only be explained by an environmental cause. Either their autism data is flawed, or there is an important environmental pathogen that can cause temporary fluctuations in the incidence of autism, or the world is facing an epidemic which will make HIV and BSE seem like small problems."

There are other concerns too:

- the study concentrated on boys, who have a higher incidence of autism;
- observed levels of autism may differ from true levels, given the complexities and differences in diagnosis;
- if immunisation is a suspect for the "environmental" trigger, there are other vaccination factors which may distort the trends and which are not accounted for in the research. For example, the introduction of the Hib vaccine on top of other child vaccines in 1992; the massive 1994 catch-up programme, when seven million children were vaccinated or revaccinated against a perceived measles threat; and the introduction of a two-dose schedule for MMR in 1996. Some of the families now taking legal action against drug companies claim their children were damaged by both of these exercises;
- better diagnosis followed the introduction of MMR, skewing the "trend".

In any event no one – least of all Dr Andrew Wakefield, whose work with children suffering rare bowel disease and regressive autism led him to raise questions over MMR – is suggesting that all autism is triggered by vaccination.

But newspapers reporting the research described it as a "blow to researchers led by Wakefield" and said it was further reassurance about the safety of MMR. Nothing could be further from the truth.

What all this highlights is the need for the kind of long-term international research that the government's own scientists suggested was needed (see *Eye 1021*) "to settle the question of any possible association between autism and MMR". The government seems to have forgotten this, however, in its determination to deny parents the right to single vaccines and to promote MMR.

ST MICHAEL AND ST GIORGI

FEW who watched it will forget the impact of Tony Blair's moving contribution to Holocaust Remembrance Day on 27 January in which he sang familiar old tunes on the horrors of genocide ("never again", "lessons of history", etc).

Pals: Tony and Ed

But what is genocide? One of the most startling definitions dates back only a few years, to April 1993, when the Georgian government led a ferocious war on the Abkhazian minority whose mere presence was resented by Georgian ministers.

The French journal *Le Monde Diplomatique* quoted Giorgi Khaindrava, Georgian minister for Abkhazian affairs, as saying that that there were so few Abkhazians (less than 100,000) in Georgia that the Georgians needed to kill only 15,000 young people to "wipe out their entire genetic stock".

There was no comment or criticism from the prime minister of Georgia, Eduard Shevardnadze, who had come to power by armed coup. In April 2000 Shevardnadze became president of Georgia in an election whose results, according to the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, "strained credulity beyond breaking point".

That was enough for Tony Blair, who immediately recommended Shevardnadze for a knighthood and a medal acknowledging him as a member of the most distinguished order of St Michael and St George (KCMG).

The knighthood came almost exactly 20 years after another Labour government (under Harold Wilson) bestowed a similar honour on that other genocide enthusiast, Nicolae Ceausescu, dictator of Romania.

TRUST FUND BABE?

ALMOST a year ago the *Eye (issue 998)* commented on the departure from public affairs of Julia Lomas, chief executive of the Public Trust Office, which looked after the interests of the mentally-handicapped.

Ms Lomas was, we reported, "making the time-honoured move from public to private office". She had accepted a job as "consultant with partner status" at solicitors Irwin Mitchell, who look after the interests of the mentally-handicapped.

The terms whereby Ms Lomas left public office have now been subjected to some acerbic comment from the Commons public accounts committee (PAC). MPs on the committee were not at all pleased to hear that the chief executive had left six months before her contract was up with £63,000 of public money in her pocket. This sum included £38,700 as payment for the final six months of her term of office, in which she did no work at all, and a further £24,300 bonus payments, much of which was paid at the highest possible rate.

The committee noted that these generous terms were agreed despite the Public Trust Office's "serious failings in key areas". The MPs concluded: "In our view the presumption should instead be that a bonus is payable only to the extent that there is clear evidence of achievement."

The MPs were further annoyed by the clause in Ms Lomas's severance agreement preventing disclosure of the settlement terms by either side. This was in clear breach of the department's undertakings on the subject, and was firmly censured by the committee, whose members for some reason did not take into account that the head of the relevant department is the lord chancellor, Lord Irvine, whose scrupulous concern for ordinary rules about controlling public expenditure is legendary.

In the City

AN information technology consultant has been charged with attempting to obtain £25m from a major high street bank by threatening to reveal vital secrets of its well-known credit card's security system. The threat was considered so great that if executed it could have necessitated the enforced replacement of all the bank's many millions of credit cards.

Indeed so sensitive is the prosecution that the committal proceedings and certain earlier court hearings took place behind closed doors at the request of the crown prosecution service (CPS).

This highly unusual procedure is normally restricted to cases involving national security. An attempt to ban the press from a pre-trial hearing involving former MI5 officer David Shayler was refused by a judge last week.

The in-camera decision followed discussions involving senior law officers including the attorney-general Lord Williams and lobbying by the bank, which cannot be named for legal reasons. The Bank of England is also closely following the case and the potential security risks involved. However, a Bank official was barred from the brief committal hearing.

Graham Browne was committed for trial at the Old Bailey earlier this month charged with making "an unwarranted demand for £25m with menaces" between March and September last year. Browne, 57, lives near Crewe in Cheshire and is a director of a company called Aaben Kryptografi which has offices in nearby Altrincham. He was arrested following an investigation by detectives from the City of London police.

The bank involved is not identified in the blackmail charge against Browne. This is normal in blackmail cases where an individual victim needs protection from the nature of the threats being revealed. But again it is unusual in cases involving companies. However, banks are notoriously sensitive to the embarrassment caused by exposure of either security leaks or weaknesses involving financial or customers' data.

At Browne's first court appearance the bank was represented in court by a QC. Its highly profitable credit card operation, one of Europe's biggest, is a major contributor to profits. A key computer centre is in the north of England.

THE hoop-la over leaked details from the draft report from the Department of Timidity & Inaction's inspectors into Cap'n Bob's raping and pillaging of Mirror Group Newspapers contains few surprises to those who followed the sorry saga of the fat crook's City advisers and stooge co-directors who queued to take the Maxwell shilling and profited mightily so long as they kept silent about his crimes.

Much more interesting is how the report will deal with those individuals who have been tried and acquitted of any wrongdoing with the pension funds rather than those who were never charged, not to mention those guilty men like Cap'n Bob who are dead. The parallel from the equally extortionately expensive and equally historic Guinness report is not good.

The guilty Guinness Four – Ernest Saunders, Gerald Ronson, Anthony Parnes and Sir Jack Lyons – were generally castigated by the inspectors. But those who had been acquitted or had the charges dropped – Roger Seelig, Lord Spens, David Mayhew – were handled with kid gloves. For very good reason. Years after the trial event, the DTI took the view it could not convict those who had not been found guilty without risk of legal action.

The same problem confronts the MGN inspectors whose 1,000-plus pages on the 1991 Mirror flotation arrive even later than that on Guinness – already more than nine years after the monstrous Maxwell went Bob-Bob-bobbing along.

Clearly it will not be possible to remove all criticism of Kevin and Ian not to mention Cap'n Bob's other acquitted little helper, Larry Trachtenberg. Kevin after all had effectively been found guilty by a civil judge of lying on one of the matters similar to that on which he was later acquitted by a jury.

But the report has yet to reflect what will undoubtedly be the resistance of the Maxwells to anything which could be seen as challenging the jury verdict. Like all innocent men, the legal tactics of Kevin Maxwell in particular have played a big role in delaying the appearance of the report to more than five years *after* his acquittal.

The important goal for the Maxwells, particularly Kevin, is to avoid a ban from being a company director. Something the inspectors could and should recommend – as they should for all those who either like Kevin actively lied and hussled for the pension pillager or like Ian and the rest supinely did nothing to stop him.

There is more than enough evidence to condemn Kevin Maxwell and the other weaker, pliant members of his father's coterie even though the report does not consider the events of the final months before the Maxwell empire collapsed. The big question is whether in the face of the jury acquittal the inspectors will be up for it. And if they are, whether the DTI will fancy taking on the steely Kevin. Neither seems a good bet right now.

No further action was taken after the Guinness report nor after another historical exercise finally published last year, the investigation into insider dealing at Wace. All three reports cost millions and unless the DTI defies its nickname they will have achieved nothing other than the enrichment of some of those who wrote the reports.

MEANWHILE back to more recent events at the *Mirror* newspaper. The decision to pay off chief Slicker Anil Bhoyrul rather than face an industrial tribunal over his sacking looks suspiciously like "hush money".

Bhoyrul had made no secret of his intention to use the tribunal to point the finger firmly at his one time friend and fellow share trader, editor Piers Morgan, and other senior *Mirror* executives. His "unfair dismissal", along with the other Slicker, James Hipwell, he would claim, was because he had been made a scapegoat to save a valuable editor.

The Bhoyrul line was going to be that "Moron" knew of trading by *Mirror* insiders on the Slickers' share tips ahead of publication and in blatant breach of the press complaints commission (PCC) code, City regulations and the law. He was expected to detail many of the tips he had shared with "Moron" and others. This was clearly going to be severely embarrassing for Trinity Mirror given that its celebrated internal inquiry had cleared "Moron". So what better result than to pay out £15,000 to cover Bhoyrul's notice period and prevent all that damaging publicity?

The problem for would-be City grandee Sir Victor Blank is that silencing Bhoyrul at the tribunal does not remove the risk that his claims may not yet be heard in a criminal court as and when the DTI decides what action to take against the Slickers.

SHAREHOLDERS in Lonmin South Africa, the former Lonrho, may be concerned to learn that the company has considered taking legal action against its former chief executive Dieter Bock for possibly costing the company more than £30m compensation for a mining deal which went wrong.

The deal was the 1990 purchase of the Karee platinum mine in South Africa by the then Lonrho from Gencor. A deal done by Bock's predecessor and initial patron "Tiny" Rowland.

Karee was next door to the successful Western Platinum mine operated by Lonrho. However, Lonrho quickly discovered that the Karee deposit was unworkable and in 1996 sought to enforce the warranties provided by Gencor's subsidiary Impala Platinum. Lonrho claimed that Impala had withheld information which showed there were serious mining problems.

Under the terms of the 1990 deal any dispute was to be referred to a committee comprised of the chief executives of Lonrho and Gencor. By October 1996 this meant Bock and Brian Gilbertson.

Lonrho subsequently discovered that Bock had secretly met that month with Gilbertson and without board approval or legal or expert advice agreed to waive the £30m claim against Impala. Three days after that secret meeting Bock announced that he had sold his 18 percent stake in Lonrho, acquired from Rowland, to Gencor rival Anglo American for £257m and stepped down as chief executive. The Lonrho board did not learn of his waiver of the Karee claim until more than a week later.

Bock defended his action by stating that he did not consider the Karee claim strong and that it was in Lonrho's interests to keep good relations with Gencor which was a potential merger partner.

Bock's stunned co-directors were suspicious of his explanations. Once he had resigned from the board company lawyers were requested to explore a possible claim against Bock for breach of duty and acting against the interests of Lonrho and its Western Platinum subsidiary.

However, it was decided to await the outcome of a South African legal case in which Impala was seeking to enforce the waiver agreement. This was resolved last year against Western Platinum. The now Lonmin told shareholders last November it was no longer to pursue the £30m claim or "alternative options". No mention was made that suing Bock had been one of those options.

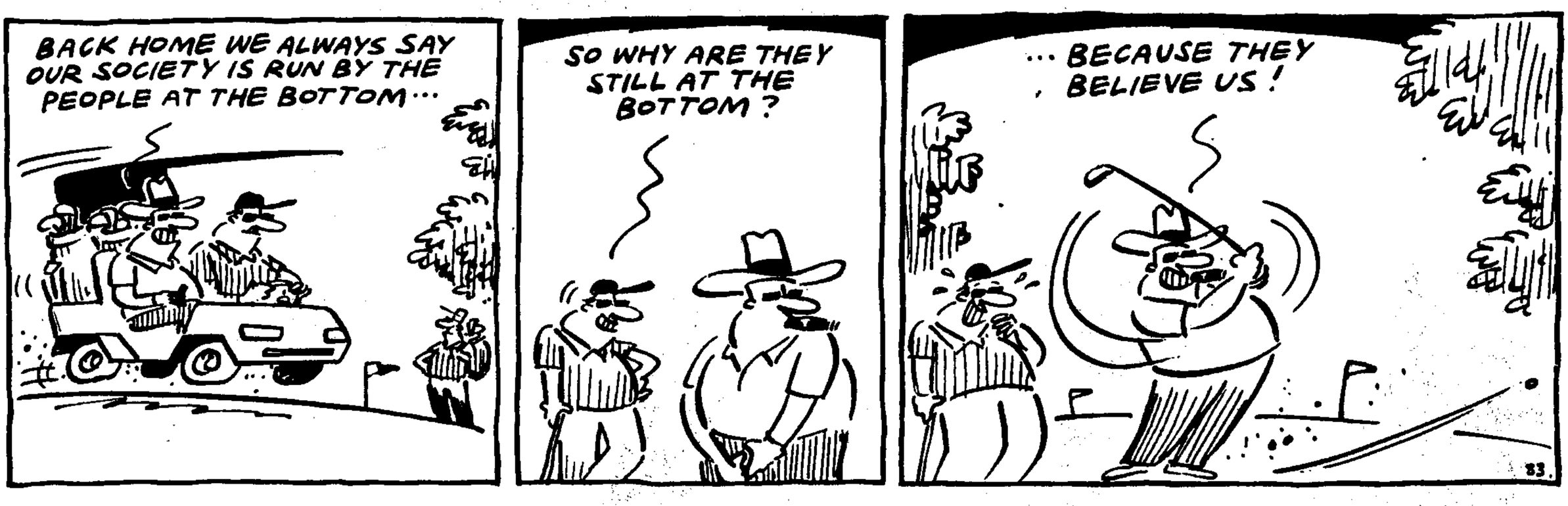
'Slicker'

A Lothian Borders Police spokesman said: "We think shriek alarms are not necessary when you have car horns, lights and mobile phones. It seems a bit over the top and alarmist."

Daily Record

THE DIRECTORS

DREDGE/RIGG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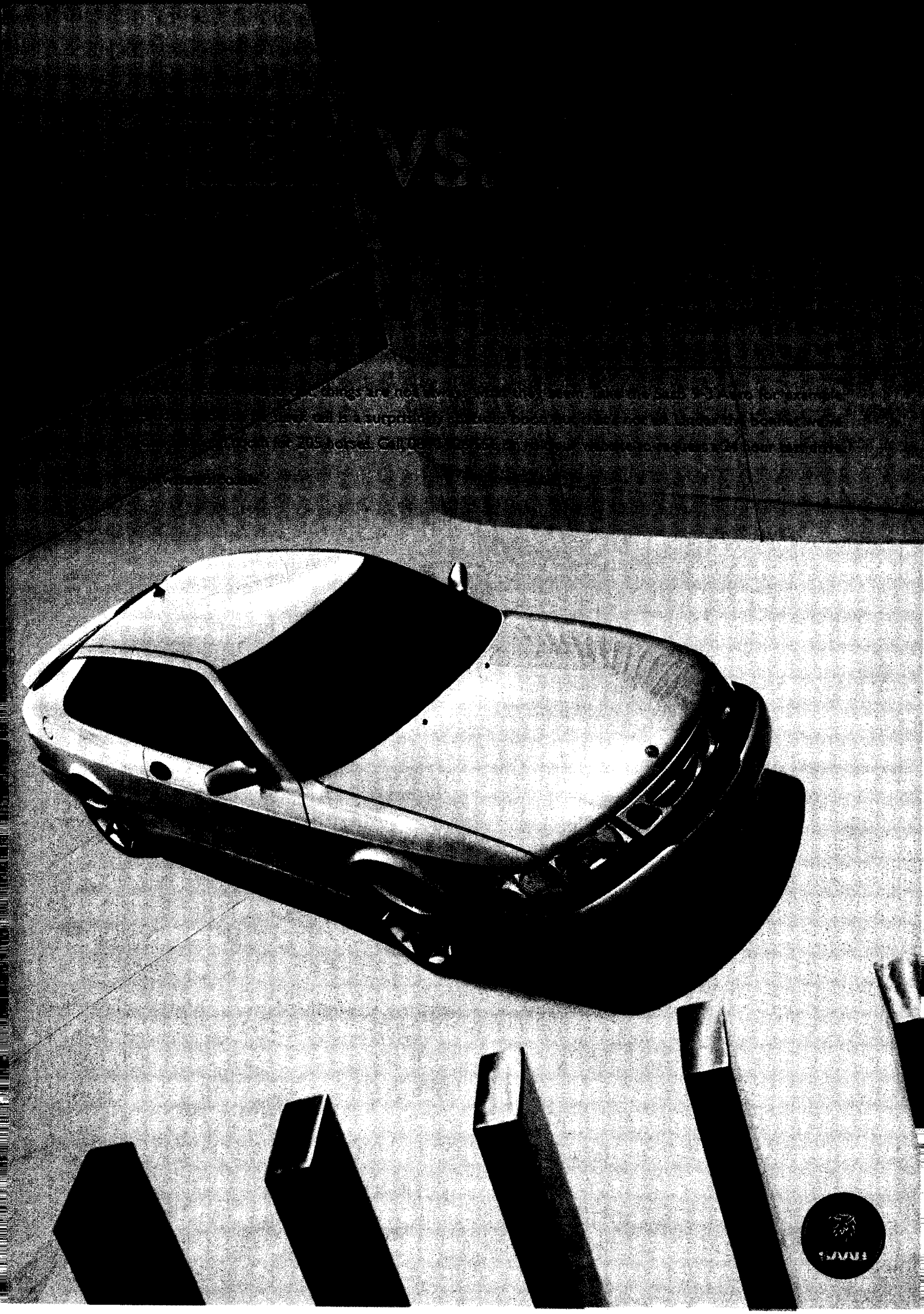
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London Metro

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DEBONAIR, cultured Englishman, attractive, young 40s, seeks intelligent, imaginative, retro glamorous mistress (long gloved, stilletos). Portrait appreciated. Box 1622.

ATTRACTIVE VIRILE male, 50, non-smoker, pleasant personality, attached but bored – seeks attractive female, 40-60 for discreet, sensual encounters. Initial meeting Manchester area? Box 1322.

AMIABLE MALE, young looking, 60, assertive, affectionate, occasional displays of wit and intellect, WLTM a pleasant, intelligent, unassertive younger female. London/Essex. Photo and phone appreciated. Box 1122.

RECENTLY SEPARATED, tall, athletic, entrepreneur, youthful 50, based London and Spain at weekends – looking for exciting, loyal, younger female for fun and friendship. Please send photo. Box 0922.

FEMALE, 39, TALL(ISH), N/S veggie... warm, intelligent, reliable, fun. Seeking similar single guy, 35-plus – solvent, GSOH. Photo please. Box 0822.

ESTABLISHED, married, rugged investment baker of Latin origins good skier, 6'2", 40s – seeks tall, non-smoking, articulate woman, well-endowed, small waist, discreet. Must be very fit, good looking, early 30s. Chelsea. E-mail: topbanker@hotmail.com

MEGASEXED BUT KNIGHTLY male, 50, craves lusty nympho female for clandestine advanced romps. Box 0722.

FUN, INTERESTING, attractive, short, bored, divorced 32 yr old, living in Madrid, needs female friend for travelling, holidays, weekends, whatever. Must be wonderful – ralph@incahair.com

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YOUNG, irritatingly cheerful, non-signing deaf guy seeks flat share (and fun times) in central London with older professional woman. Rates to be negotiated: gsfun55@hotmail.com

PRETTY BRUNETTE from Kent, slim, needs spoiling and pampering. Tel: 07931 987272.

GOOD-LOOKING BIRD aged 27-32 to fall in love with. Are you up for it? Box 0622.

GENT. Seeks lady, broadminded, narrow hipped, 35-55 for discrete lust and trust. Norfolk. Box 0921.

NON-ASSERTIVE MALE, 43, educated – seeks assertive female to dedicate his life to. Genuine. Box 0522.

LACK LUST(RE) partner? Attached mid-fifties man in similar predicament would love to help you. Discretion wanted and assured. London or South Coast. Box 0422.

YOUTHFUL WIDOW, 56, fun-loving, Bedfordshire/anywhere – seeks compatible, easy-going, n/s successful man for theatre, walks, travel and fun. Recent photo please. Box 0322.

LOVER, FRIEND, confidante sought by presentable, 50s male, attached but not fulfilled. If you would like to be cherished by a sensual, discreet professional man, then please reply. London/.Berkshire. Box 0222.

WANTED: STRIPTEASE or other artiste, with very large shapely breasts and hourglass figure, to discuss music, books and art – and also to help me practise my violin. Box 1922.

EASY GOING, fun-loving meeja boy, 28, 5'9", seeks blithe spirit for high jinx – oj800@hotmail.com

OLDER GRADUATE, 33, seeks older Mrs Robinson to finish education – markgrad@hotmail.com or Box 1422.

BORED ARMY CAPTAIN, 30, seeks entertainment. You must not be vegetarian i.e. you must like eating meat. No overly serious replies as life is too short (carpe diem). Please help. Box 1222.

BESPOKE 40'S SCOTTISH bloke, single WLTM single attractive female. GSOH a prerequisite. London area. Protis10@AOL.com. Box no 0122.

LONELY BERMONDSEY BOY, doing 18 months for selling Ecstasy and Cannabis to friends – yearns for nice female (fellow prisoner?) penpal for fun and friendship by post. Box 2122.

ROYAL NAVY OFFICER, 5'10", 25, v.fit, seeks fit smart woman, 18-30, for discreet erotic liaisons. South/South-West England – henryj33@hotmail.com

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1993	Ⓜ	£ 220

Ch. Giscours
Margaux - 3e cru classé

1998		£ 270
1997	Ⓜ	£ 220
1996	Ⓜ	£ 300
1995	Ⓜ	£ 290
1990	Ⓜ	£ 570
1989	Ⓜ	£ 570

Ch. La Tour de Mons
Margaux - Cru bourgeois

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1996	Ⓜ	£ 190
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1989		£ 320

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1995		£ 370
1994	Ⓜ	£ 320
1993	Ⓜ	£ 310
1990		£ 570
1989		£ 570

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1994	Ⓜ	£ 320
1993	Ⓜ	£ 310
1992	Ⓜ	£ 260

Ch. Gloria
Saint-Julien - Cru bourgeois

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1994		£ 220
1993	Ⓜ	£ 210

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Pauillac - 5e cru classé

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1997	Ⓜ	£ 270
1996	Ⓜ	£ 410
1995	Ⓜ	£ 390
1994	Ⓜ	£ 320
1993	Ⓜ	£ 290
1989		£ 570

Ch. Haut-Batailley
Pauillac - 5e cru classé

1998	Ⓜ	£ 250
1997	Ⓜ	£ 240
1994		£ 240

Ch. Lynch-Bages
Pauillac - 5e cru classé

❤ 1998	Ⓜ	£ 460
1997	Ⓜ	£ 430
1996	Ⓜ	£ 520
1995	Ⓜ	£ 470
1994		£ 380
1993	Ⓜ	£ 370

Ch. La Fleur Peyrabon
Pauillac - Cru bourgeois

❤ 1998	Ⓜ	£ 180
1997	Ⓜ	£ 160
1996		£ 200

Ch. Haut-Marbuzet
Saint-Estèphe - Cru bourgeois

1998		£ 310
1997	Ⓜ	£ 280
1996		£ 320

Ch. La Lagune
Haut-Médoc - 3e cru classé

❤ 1998	Ⓜ	£ 280
1997	Ⓜ	£ 220
1996	Ⓜ	£ 350
1995	Ⓜ	£ 330
1994	Ⓜ	£ 300
1993	Ⓜ	£ 290

Ch. Peyrabon
Haut-Médoc - Cru bourgeois

1998	Ⓜ	£ 150
1997	Ⓜ	£ 120
❤ 1996		£ 160

Ch. Sociando-Mallet
Haut-Médoc - Cru bourgeois

1998	Ⓜ	£ 310
1997	Ⓜ	£ 270
1994		£ 300
1993		£ 280

Ch. Chasse-Spleen
Moulis - Cru bourgeois

❤ 1998	Ⓜ	£ 250
1997	Ⓜ	£ 190
1996		£ 260
1994		£ 230
1993	Ⓜ	£ 220

Ch. de Sales
Pomerol

1998	Ⓜ	£ 240
1997	Ⓜ	£ 170
1996	Ⓜ	£ 210
1995		£ 250
1994	Ⓜ	£ 210
1993	Ⓜ	£ 190

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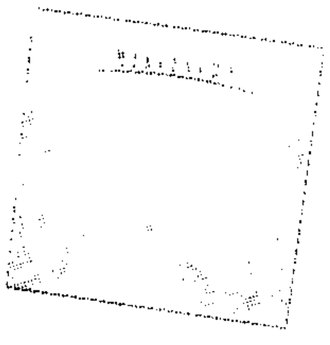

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